

CAMBRIDGE
READINGS IN LITERATURE
BOOK FOUR



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READINGS IN LITERATURE
BOOK FOUR

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

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THE KNIGHT, DEATH AND THE DEVIL

Dürer

CAMBRIDGE
READINGS IN LITERATURE

EDITED BY
GEORGE SAMPSON

BOOK FOUR

CAMBRIDGE
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS

1918

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PREFACE

THESE reading books have been prepared in the first instance for use among pupils of eleven or twelve and above, and are thus suitable for the middle forms of secondary schools, the four years of central and higher grade schools, the upper standards of elementary schools and the literature courses of continuation schools. Admirable use is now made of what are called *Continuous Readers*; but these should not wholly supplant a miscellany, a collection of extracts good in themselves and representative of great or interesting writers.

Reading in schools may take three forms—audible reading by individual pupils, silent reading by all members of a class and reading by the teacher to the class. These forms represent three grades of difficulty in matter. Pupils can appreciate poetry and prose well read to them which they could not themselves read aloud with intelligence. Some parts, therefore, of the available material should reach the third grade of difficulty. It must certainly not all be kept down to the level of a stumbler's precarious fluency. Literature should be measured out to readers by their capacity to receive rather than by their ability to deliver.

Young people do not fully understand much of their reading; but they can be deeply impressed even where they do not comprehend; and their selective instincts (very different in different cases) should at least have a chance of working upon noble matter. We must

take the mean, not the meanest, capacity for our standard. Difficulty is not an affair of words. Pupils of fifteen can get more from Wordsworth's *Immortality* ode than from such apparently simple poems as *The Fountain* and *The Two April Mornings*—more, even, from the great narrative passages of *Paradise Lost*, than from the exquisite traceries of *Lycidas*. They can understand, in a sense, a scene from *Prometheus*, but they will hardly understand in any sense a *Conversation* of Landor. The nearer prose or verse lies to the elemental, the nearer it lies to the young reader's understanding.

The present collection is purely a miscellany. Some hints of a purpose in the choice and arrangement of passages will be discerned, but this is not emphasised, and, generally, the collection may be said to exist for its parts rather than for any fanciful wholeness. It does not in the least pretend to be representative of any special age or country, or to exhibit the main types of literature, or to have one inflexible standard of inclusion. It is certainly not a selection from the "hundred best books." The editor's aim has been to give young readers the pleasure that is also a profit—to afford them the varied excitements (and incitements) of miscellaneous reading, to introduce to their notice certain poems, passages, books and writers great, or famous, or merely entertaining, and to associate with these a few pictures, drawings and engravings of widely differing schools and periods. Perhaps it may be added that special care has been given to the text.

The general tendency of school reading nowadays is towards a more ordered and therefore more restricted range of English literature, and away from the mis-

cellaneous knowledge that amused the youth of older people. Much has been gained by the change; but something, too, has been lost. It is better, certainly, to know some poems in particular than to know something about poetry in general. The pupil of to-day gets a first-hand acquaintance with some selected examples of English literature, but he misses that general knowledge of books, which, though it may amount to very little in present profit, is a great investment towards future reading. The indiscriminate young reader of old at least got to know some of the landmarks in general literature. To-day, the student of twenty, who can read (say) Francis Thompson with appreciation, has been known to refer, in the more expansive moments of his essays, to the epic poems of Plato and the tragic dramas of Dante. The present volumes, as a middle course between too vague general knowledge and too restricted selection, will supplement, without disturbing, any chosen or prescribed scheme of study.

They may even find another use; for books have destinies of their own. The savage satire for men becomes (after due purgation) a playbook for children; and the children's fairy tale, with its delicate irony, becomes the delight of the elders. Perhaps the present volumes may achieve this extended application, and amuse the grown-up and the growing-up as well as instruct the children. The puzzling question, "What ought I to read," often asked by young people with a developing sense of responsibility, can be answered, at least in part, by these volumes. To such inquirers it may be said, "Here you will find many clues to the paradise of literature: follow that which leads you through the most attractive way." Had the collection

been designed in the first place for older readers, some passages now included might have been replaced by others less familiar. Still, the familiar has its claim, and, "in vacant or in pensive mood," even a special charm for experienced readers. The day-book of the boy may be welcome as a bedside book for the man.

The variety of the entertainment is part of the plan. Neither man nor boy can live by the sublime alone, and so the range of the selection has been made very wide. Modern and even contemporary work has been drawn upon, though one's liberty of choice is here very restricted. Whether we are teachers or learners, we must not be fearful of the new. For us there should be no "battle of the antient and modern books," but one great stream of literature with all its lesser waters, as full and noble now as ever.

GEORGE SAMPSON

August 1918

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Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528) was born at Nuremberg and is famous alike as a painter and engraver. The power and the perfection of workmanship in Dürer's pictures are specially wonderful. The present plate exhibits in pictorial art the elaborate symbolism of medieval belief that Goethe reproduces in the poetry of *Faust*.

TO FACE PAGE

BLAKE—Job and his Family 2

William Blake (1757–1827) is famous alike as poet and artist. He painted pictures and drew designs to illustrate his own books and the works of others. The very remarkable set of engravings for the *Book of Job*, of which four are reproduced here, exhibit in a high degree the beauty of design, the imaginative power and the intensity of feeling that characterise his work.

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BLAKE—'The morning stars sang together' 7

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William Strang (b. 1859), a living Scottish artist, is specially famous for his etchings, of which the present portrait is an example.

By kind permission of the artist and Methuen and Co., Ltd.

TURNER—The Marriage of the Adriatic 48

The present picture illustrates the old ceremony of wedding Venice to the waters. With elaborate pomp, the Doge went in the great galley *Bucentaur* and cast a ring into the sea, thus symbolising the union of the city with the element from which it derived its greatness.

By arrangement with George Allen and Unwin, Ltd.

TURNER—Hougoumont 62

Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775–1851), the greatest of English artists, was born in London, and showed his artistic gifts at a very early age. Indeed, he drew and painted almost without ceasing from his earliest years to his death. For some time he made sketches for engravings. His most famous work in this form is called *Liber Studiorum*, a series of seventy drawings in sepia afterwards engraved on copper. The *Scene in the Campagna* below is one of these. Many sketches, too, were made to illustrate the works of famous writers. Thus, ‘Hougoumont’ is an illustration in Scott’s *Paul’s Letters to his Kinsfolk* and ‘The Field of Waterloo’ in Scott’s *Life of Napoleon*. From 1819, the time of his first visit to Venice, began the series of famous paintings, wonderful in their rendering of light and colour. Most of Turner’s great oil-pictures and almost innumerable water-colour drawings are in the national collections.

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This picture is taken from a decorated cup in the Vatican, as reproduced in Dr W. Ridgeway’s *Origin of Tragedy*. In this form of cup the design was painted on the inside, frequently in red, sometimes in black and purple, on a white ground.

TURNER—Scene in the Campagna 122

By arrangement with The Autotype Fine Art Company, Ltd.

PIRANESI—Paestum 128

Giambattista Piranesi (1720–1778), etcher and architect, was born in Venice. His studies in Rome, however, attached him strongly to the Eternal City, and his principal works are imaginative etchings of the great crumbling monuments of classical antiquity in Rome and its environs—a realisation, in pictorial art, of Shakespeare’s lines,

‘When I have seen by Time’s fell hand defaced
The rich proud cost of out-worn buried age.’

ANDREA DELLA ROBBIA—‘At first the infant’ 184

Luca della Robbia (1400–1482) and his nephew Andrea della Robbia (1435–1525) were famous sculptors of Florence. Much of Luca’s work is to be seen in the doors and decorations of the cathedral there. The two also produced many terra-cotta figures and medallions. A series of ‘bambini’ or babies, probably by Andrea, decorates the façade of the Foundling Hospital in Florence very delightful representations of the age of infancy.

By arrangement with The Medici Society, Ltd.

RAEBURN—'Then the schoolboy.' The Leslie Boy 185

Sir Henry Raeburn (1756-1823), greatest of Scottish artists, was born in the suburbs of Edinburgh, and apprenticed to a jeweller, but soon discovered his bent for art, and especially for portraiture. So popular did he become in this form of art that he left about a thousand portrait-pictures, most of which take high rank as paintings. Edinburgh, and Scotland generally, contains the best of his work. The present picture (in the collection of Lord Glenconner) is a beautiful representation of the 'second age of man'—the 'growing boy' of Wordsworth's great ode.

By arrangement with The Medici Society, Ltd.

DÜRER—'Then a soldier.' St George 186

Dürer's *St George* is a superb representation of 'the soldier,' the 'age of man' in which feats of arms are specially attractive.

DÜRER—'Last scene of all.' Drawing of an Old Man 187

This wonderful drawing of an old man, aged ninety-three, as the inscription at the top records, is in the Albertina Library at Vienna. Perhaps no finer representation of extreme old age exists.

HOGARTH—Prison Scene—A Rake's Progress 232

William Hogarth (1697-1764), 'the most English of painters,' was born in London and studied under Sir James Thornhill. He soon began to practise as an engraver and produced several series of plates exhibiting, with the unsparing hand of a moralist and satirist, the vices of the age in which he lived. The set of six pictures called *Marriage à la Mode* (in the National Gallery), the four called *The Election* and the eight called *The Rake's Progress* (in the Soane Museum) are his best works. Hogarth also painted some admirable portraits. The plate here reproduced from *A Rake's Progress* shows the interior of an eighteenth century prison, and the plate from *Industry and Idleness* the appalling scenes of coarseness and brutality that accompanied the frequent and degrading spectacle of public executions, when the wretched victims were carted through London from Newgate to Tyburn (near the present Marble Arch) to be hanged—often for no crime more serious than petty theft.

HOGARTH—The Idle Prentice carried to Tyburn 233

GIOTTO—Dante 240

Giotto di Bondone was born near Florence towards the end of the thirteenth century and died in 1337. He broke away from the stiff traditional mosaic-like painting that prevailed in the religious art of his time, and went to nature for his inspiration. The work of Giotto cannot be studied out of Italy, as it takes the form

mainly of frescoes, the most famous being those in the church at Assisi illustrating the life of St Francis. One of these is reproduced in an earlier volume. About 1300 Giotto painted on the walls of the chapel of the Bargello in Florence (once the residence of the Podestà or chief magistrate, and now a museum) a portrait of his great contemporary and compatriot Dante. In the course of time the picture was whitewashed over and remained obliterated and forgotten for two centuries. It was uncovered in 1840. One of the eyes has been destroyed probably through the pulling out of a nail.

By arrangement with The Medici Society, Ltd.

MICHELINO—Dante and his Book

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In 1465 a picture of Dante was painted in the Cathedral of Florence by command of the Republic. It was executed by Domenico di Michelino (1417-1491), the portrait of Dante being from a model furnished by Alesso Baldovinetti (1427-1499), who probably based his conception on Giotto's fresco described above. To the right of the poet is the gate of Hell, behind him the mount of Purgatory rising in circles to the Earthly Paradise at the summit. To his left are the principal buildings of Florence. The Latin inscription under the picture has been thus rendered :

'Behold the poet, who in lofty verse
Heaven, hell and purgatory did rehearse ;
The learned Dante ! whose capacious soul
Survey'd the universe, and knew the whole.
To his own Florence he a father proved,
Honour'd for counsel, for religion loved.
Death could not hurt so great a bard as he,
Who lives in virtue, verse and effigy.'

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BOTTICELLI—The Gloomy Wood

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Alessandro Filipepi, called Botticelli (1446?-1510) was born in Florence, where most of his work was done. His gentle, melancholy grace is well suited to the religious subjects upon which he mainly drew for his pictures—though it happens that two of his best known works, *The Birth of Venus* and *Primavera* (Spring) are not religious. Botticelli made a series of remarkable drawings in silverpoint to accompany a manuscript of Dante's great poem. These wonderful works, formerly in the possession of the Duke of Hamilton, were purchased at a public sale in England by representatives of the German government and are now in Berlin. Three of them are reproduced here. The first illustrates the opening of the poem—the 'gloomy wood,' the encounter with the panther, the lion and the wolf—symbolising Luxury, Pride and Avarice.

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This illustrates the allegorical procession of the triumphal car drawn by the Gryphon, the mystic animal half-eagle and half-lion, described in Bk xxix and onwards of the *Purgatorio*.

BOTTICELLI—Dante and Beatrice	251
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This is part of a design showing Dante and Beatrice (*Paradiso* 1 and 11).

PIRANESI—A Dream Prison. Carceri, Plate 8	260
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In addition to the Roman etchings described above, Piranesi drew wild dream-pictures of Prisons ('Carceri,' in Italian)—great places with never-ending staircases leading nowhere, and other extravagances of dreams. It is to these that De Quincey refers in his *Confessions*. One of these dream-pictures is reproduced here.

The design on the cover is taken from the *Luttrell Psalter*, a Latin *Psalter* of the fourteenth century.

JOHN MILTON

ON BOOKS

For books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. I know they are as lively, and as vigorously productive, as those fabulous dragon's teeth; and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men. And yet, on the other hand, unless wariness be used, as good almost kill a man as kill a good book: who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is the precious life blood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life.

(Areopagitica.)

THE ENGLISH BIBLE

IN the time of Queen Elizabeth there existed several translations of the Bible or parts of the Bible into English. The oldest was made by friends and followers of John Wyclif at the end of the fourteenth century; then came Tyndale's (1525-34); next Coverdale's—the *Great Bible* (1539); next the version made by English reformers settled at Geneva—the *Geneva Bible* (1559-60); and then a translation made by certain bishops in Elizabeth's reign—the *Bishops' Bible* (1568). The Book of Psalms as it appears in the Church of England Prayer Book is, in the main, the work of Coverdale.

Early in the seventeenth century, King James ordered a new translation of the Bible to be made; it was published in 1611, and has been known ever since as the Authorised Version. An amended form of this translation published in 1881-5 is popularly called the Revised Version.

The Bible of 1611 found its way to the hearts of the English people, and its splendid language has influenced English thought and speech for over three hundred years. Two supreme glories of the English tongue are two great books published in the reign of James I—the Bible of 1611 and Mr William Shakespeare's *Comedies, Histories & Tragedies* of 1623.

The book of Job, from which the following extract is taken, relates a very ancient story current probably in the seventh century B.C.

JOB

There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil. And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters. His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the East. And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day, and sent and called for their three sisters, to eat and to drink with them. And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts: Thus did Job continually.

Now there was a day, when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth,

and from walking up and down in it. And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth? a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

And there was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: and there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them, and the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: and, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, and said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.

In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD. And the LORD said unto Satan,

Our Father which art in Heaven

hallowed be thy Name



Thus did Job continually

There was a Man in the
Land of Uz whose Name
was Job. & that Man
was perfect & upright

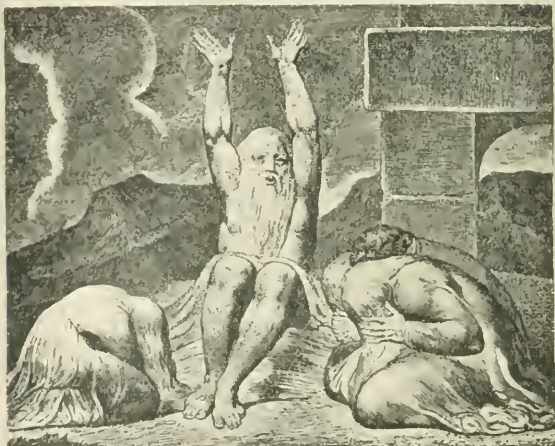
The Letter Killeth
The Spirit giveth Life
It is Spiritually Discerned

& one that feared God
& eschewed Evil & there
was born unto him Seven
Sons & Three Daughters
W. Blake inv & sculp

JOB AND HIS FAMILY

Blake

Lo let that night be solitary
& let no joyful voice come therein



Let the Day perish wherein I was Born
And they sat down with him upon the ground seven days & seven
nights & none spake a word unto him for they saw that his grief
was very great

JOB'S DESPAIR

Blake

From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause. And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.

So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes.

Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die. But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him. And when they lift up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven. So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great.

After this opened Job his mouth, and cursed his day.

And Job spake, and said,

Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived.

Let that day be darkness; let not God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it.

Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it; let a cloud dwell upon it; let the blackness of the day terrify it.

As for that night, let darkness seize upon it; let it not be joined unto the days of the year, let it not come into the number of the months.

Lo, let that night be solitary, let no joyful voice come therein.

Let them curse it that curse the day, who are ready to raise up their mourning.

Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark; let it look for light, but have none; neither let it see the dawning of the day....

For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept: then had I been at rest,

With kings and counsellors of the earth, which built desolate places for themselves;

Or with princes that had gold, who filled their houses with silver:

Or as an hidden untimely birth, I had not been; as infants which never saw light.

There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest.

There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor.

The small and great are there; and the servant is free from his master.

Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul;

Which long for death, but it cometh not; and dig for it more than for hid treasures;

Which rejoice exceedingly, and are glad, when they can find the grave?

Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?

For my sighing cometh before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like the waters.

For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me.

I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came.

[The long conversations between Job and his cheerless "comforters" are recorded in several chapters of the book. Job remains steadfast in his reliance upon the goodness of God and is at last restored to even greater well being than was the case at first. The Lord rebukes the foolish comforters, and reminds Job how feeble man is in comparison with the works of God.]

Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,
Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?

Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.

Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding.

Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?

Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof;

When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb?

When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it,

And brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors,

And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?

Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the dayspring to know his place;

That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it?

It is turned as clay to the seal, and they stand as a garment.

And from the wicked their light is withholden, and the high arm shall be broken.

Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the depth?

Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?

Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth? declare if thou knowest it all.

Where is the way where light dwelleth? and as for darkness, where is the place thereof,

That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the paths to the house thereof?

Knowest thou it, because thou wast then born? or because the number of thy days is great?

Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail,

Which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?

By what way is the light parted, which scattereth the east wind upon the earth?

Who hath divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder;

To cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is; on the wilderness, wherein there is no man;

To satisfy the desolate and waste ground; and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?

Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten the drops of dew?
' Out of whose womb came the ice? and the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it?

The waters are hid as with a stone, and the face of the deep is frozen.

Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?

Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?

Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?

Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?

Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are?

Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? or who hath given understanding to the heart?

Who can number the clouds in wisdom? or who can stay the bottles of heaven,

When the dust groweth into hardness, and the clods cleave fast together?

Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lion? or fill the appetite of the young lions,

When they couch in their dens, and abide in the covert to lie in wait?

Who provideth for the raven his food? when his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat.



THE LORD ANSWERED JOB OUT OF THE WHIRLWIND
Blake



THE MORNING STARS SANG TOGETHER

Blake

Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth? or canst thou mark when the hinds do calve?

Canst thou number the months that they fulfil? or knowest thou the time when they bring forth?

They bow themselves, they bring forth their young ones, they cast out their sorrows.

Their young ones are in good liking, they grow up with corn; they go forth, and return not unto them.

Who hath sent out the wild ass free? or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?

Whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren land his dwellings.

He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver.

The range of the mountains is his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing.

Will the Unicorn be willing to serve thee, or abide by thy crib?

Canst thou bind the Unicorn with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee?

Wilt thou trust him because his strength is great? or wilt thou leave thy labour to him?

Wilt thou believe him, that he will bring home thy seed, and gather it into thy barn?

Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the peacocks? or wings and feathers unto the ostrich?

Which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in dust,

And forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them.

She is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not hers: her labour is in vain without fear;

Because God hath deprived her of wisdom, neither hath he imparted to her understanding.

What time she lifteth up herself on high, she scorneth the horse and his rider.

Hast thou given the horse strength? hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?

Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper? the glory of his nostrils is terrible.

He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength: he goeth on to meet the armed men.

He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword.

The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield.

He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage: neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet.

He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha; and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.

Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom, and stretch her wings toward the South?

Doth the Eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high?

She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place.

From thence she seeketh the prey, and her eyes behold afar off.

Her young ones also suck up blood: and where the slain are, there is he....

Then Job answered the LORD, and said, I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not....

And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.

GOETHE

JOHANN WOLFGANG GOETHE (1749-1832), the greatest of German writers, was born at Frankfort on the Main. He studied law at the university of Leipzig and made further studies at Strassburg; but, from his boyhood, he had been deeply interested in literature and the drama, and much of his student period and early manhood was spent in writing plays, poems and essays. English literature, Shakespeare especially, influenced him greatly. He soon became famous, and he was invited, in 1775, to the court of Weimar, where he became a minister of state and spent the rest of his long life. His works are many. His lengthy novel *Wilhelm Meister* (partly autobiographical) has been translated by Carlyle. Specially interesting is the fanciful account of his life called *Poetry and Truth*. Many of his poems have been made

familiar to English people by the musical settings of Schubert—the *Erlking*, and Mignon's songs, for instance, are widely known. The greatest of his works, *Faust*, is a long poetical and philosophical drama on the old legend of a student and magician who sold himself to the devil. The translation used in the following selection is that by Bayard Taylor, who has tried to reproduce the metre and rhymes of the original language. The prologue should be compared with the opening of the book of Job. Just as Satan is allowed to tempt Job, so Mephistopheles, a fallen angel and spirit of evil, is permitted to tempt the philosopher Faust.

FAUST

PROLOGUE IN HEAVEN

THE LORD. THE HEAVENLY HOSTS. *Afterwards* MEPHISTOPHELES.
The THREE ARCHANGELS come forward.

RAPHAEL. The sun-orb sings, in emulation,
'Mid brother-spheres, his ancient round:
His path predestined through Creation,
He ends with step of thunder-sound.
The angels from his visage splendid
Draw power, whose measure none can say;
The lofty works, uncomprehended,
Are bright as on the earliest day.

GABRIEL. And swift, and swift beyond conceiving,
The splendour of the world goes round,
Day's Eden-brightness still relieving
The awful Night's intense profound:
The ocean-tides in foam are breaking,
Against the rocks' deep bases hurled,
And both, the spheric race partaking,
Eternal, swift, are onward whirled!

MICHAEL. And rival storms abroad are surging
From sea to land, from land to sea,
A chain of deepest action forging
Round all, in wrathful energy.
There flames a desolation, blazing
Before the Thunder's crashing way:
Yet, Lord, Thy messengers are praising
The gentle movement of Thy Day.

THE THREE. Though still by them uncomprehended,
From these the angels draw their power,
And all Thy works, sublime and splendid,
Are bright as in Creation's hour.

MEPHIS. Since Thou, O Lord, deign'st to approach again
And ask us how we do, in manner kindest,
And heretofore to meet myself wert fain,
Among Thy menials, now, my face Thou findest.
Pardon, this troop I cannot follow after
With lofty speech, though by them scorned and spurned:
My pathos certainly would move Thy laughter,
If Thou hadst not all merriment unlearned.
Of suns and worlds I've nothing to be quoted;
How men torment themselves, is all I've noted.
The little god o' the world sticks to the same old way,
And is as whimsical as on Creation's day.
Life somewhat better might content him,
But for the gleam of heavenly light which Thou hast lent him:
He calls it Reason—thence his power's increased,
To be far beastlier than any beast.
Saving Thy Gracious Presence, he to me
A long-legged grasshopper appears to be,
That springing flies, and flying springs,
And in the grass the same old ditty sings.

THE LORD. Hast thou, then, nothing more to mention?
Com'st ever, thus, with ill intention?
Find'st nothing right on earth, eternally?

MEPHIS. No, Lord! I find things, there, still bad as they can be.
Man's misery even to pity moves my nature;
I've scarce the heart to plague the wretched creature.

THE LORD. Know'st Faust?

MEPHIS. The Doctor Faust?

THE LORD. My servant, he!

MEPHIS. Forsooth! He serves you after strange devices:
No earthly meat or drink the fool suffices.
His spirit's ferment far aspireth;
Half conscious of his frenzied, crazed unrest,
The fairest stars from Heaven he requireth,
From Earth the highest raptures and the best,

And all the Near and Far that he desireth
Fails to subdue the tumult of his breast.

THE LORD. Though still confused his service unto Me,
I soon shall lead him to a clearer morning.
Sees not the gardener, even while buds his tree,
Both flower and fruit the future years adorning?

MEPHIS. What will you bet? There's still a chance to gain him,
If unto me full leave you give,
Gently upon *my* road to train him!

THE LORD. As long as he on earth shall live,
So long I make no prohibition.
While Man's desires and aspirations stir,
He cannot choose but err.

MEPHIS. My thanks! I find the dead no acquisition,
And never cared to have them in my keeping.
I much prefer the cheeks where ruddy blood is leaping,
And when a corpse approaches, close my house:
It goes with me, as with the cat the mouse.

THE LORD. Enough! What thou hast asked is granted.
Turn off this spirit from his fountain-head;
To trap him, let thy snares be planted,
And him, with thee, be downward led;
Then stand abashed, when thou art forced to say:
A good man, through obscurest aspiration,
Has still an instinct of the one true way.

MEPHIS. Agreed! But 'tis a short probation.
About my bet I feel no trepidation.
If I fulfil my expectation,
You'll let me triumph with a swelling breast:
Dust shall he eat, and with a zest,
As did a certain snake, my near relation.

THE LORD. Therein thou'rt free, according to thy merits;
The like of thee have never moved My hate.
Of all the bold, denying Spirits,
The waggish knave least trouble doth create.
Man's active nature, flagging, seeks too soon the level;
Unqualified repose he learns to crave;
Whence, willingly, this comrade him I gave,
Who works, excites, and must create, as Devil.

But ye, God's sons in love and duty,
 Enjoy the rich, the ever-living Beauty!
 Creative Power, that works eternal schemes,
 Clasp you in bonds of love, relaxing never,
 And what in wavering apparition gleams
 Fix in its place with thoughts that stand for ever!

[*Heaven closes: the ARCHANGELS separate.*

MEPHIS. (*solus*). I like, at times, to hear The Ancient's word,
 And have a care to be most civil:
 It's really kind of such a noble Lord
 So humanly to gossip with the Devil!

END OF THE PROLOGUE

NIGHT

*A lofty-arched, narrow, Gothic chamber. FAUST, in a chair
 at his desk, restless.*

FAUST. I've studied now Philosophy
 And Jurisprudence, Medicine,—
 And even, alas! Theology,—
 From end to end, with labour keen;
 And here, poor fool! with all my lore
 I stand, no wiser than before: . . .
 Wherefore, from Magic I seek assistance,
 That many a secret perchance I reach
 Through spirit-power and spirit-speech,
 And thus the bitter task forego
 Of saying the things I do not know,—
 That I may detect the inmost force
 Which binds the world, and guides its course;
 Its germs, productive powers explore,
 And rummage in empty words no more!

O full and splendid Moon, whom I
 Have, from this desk, seen climb the sky
 So many a midnight,—would thy glow
 For the last time beheld my woe!
 Ever thine eye, most mournful friend,
 O'er books and papers saw me bend;

But would that I, on mountains grand,
Amid thy blessed light could stand,
With spirits through mountain-caverns hover,
Float in thy twilight the meadows over,
And, freed from the fumes of lore that swathe me
To health in thy dewy fountains bathe me!

Ah, me! this dungeon still I see,
This drear, accursed masonry,
Where even the welcome daylight strains
But dusky through the painted panes.
Hemmed in by many a toppling heap
Of books worm-eaten, gray with dust,
Which to the vaulted ceiling creep,
Against the smoky paper thrust,—
With glasses, boxes, round me stacked,
And instruments together hurled,
Ancestral lumber, stuffed and packed—
Such is my world: and what a world!...

Fly! Up, and seek the broad, free land!
And this one Book of Mystery
From Nostradamus' very hand,
Is't not sufficient company?
When I the starry courses know,
And Nature's wise instruction seek,
With light of power my soul shall glow,
As when to spirits spirits speak.
'Tis vain, this empty brooding here,
Though guessed the holy symbols be:
Ye, Spirits, come—ye hover near—
Oh, if you hear me, answer me!

[He opens the Book, and perceives the sign of the Macrocosm.]

Ha! what a sudden rapture leaps from this
I view, through all my senses swiftly flowing!
I feel a youthful, holy, vital bliss
In every vein and fibre newly glowing.
Was it a God, who traced this sign,
With calm across my tumult stealing,

My troubled heart to joy unsealing,
 With impulse, mystic and divine,
 The powers of Nature here, around my path, revealing?

* * * * *

[He turns the leaves impatiently, and perceives the sign of the Earth-Spirit.]

How otherwise upon me works this sign!
 Thou, Spirit of the Earth, art nearer:
 Even now my powers are loftier, clearer;
 I glow, as drunk with new-made wine:
 New strength and heart to meet the world incite me,
 The woe of earth, the bliss of earth, invite me,
 And though the shock of storms may smite me,
 No crash of shipwreck shall have power to fright me!
 Clouds gather over me—
 The moon conceals her light—
 The lamp's extinguished!—
 Mists rise,—red, angry rays are darting
 Around my head!—There falls
 A horror from the vaulted roof,
 And seizes me!
 I feel thy presence, Spirit I invoke!
 Reveal thyself!
 Ha! in my heart what rending stroke!
 With new impulsion
 My senses heave in this convulsion!
 I feel thee draw my heart, absorb, exhaust me:
 Thou must! thou must! and though my life it cost me!

[He seizes the book, and mysteriously pronounces the sign of the Spirit. A ruddy flame flashes: the SPIRIT appears in the flame.]

SPIRIT. Who calls me?

FAUST (*with averted head*). Terrible to see!

SPIRIT. Me hast thou long with might attracted,
 Long from my sphere thy food exacted,
 And now—

FAUST. Woe! I endure not thee!

SPIRIT. To view me is thine aspiration,
My voice to hear, my countenance to see;
Thy powerful yearning moveth me,
Here am I!—what mean perturbation
Thee, superhuman, shakes? Thy soul's high calling, where? . . .
Where art thou, Faust, whose voice has pierced to me,
Who towards me pressed with all thine energy?
He art thou, who, my presence breathing, seeing,
Trembles through all the depths of being,
A writhing worm, a terror-stricken form?

FAUST. Thee, form of flame, shall I then fear?
Yes, I am Faust: I am thy peer!

SPIRIT. In the tides of Life, in Action's storm,
A fluctuant wave,
A shuttle free,
Birth and the Grave,
An eternal sea,
A weaving, flowing
Life, all-glowing,
Thus at Time's humming loom 'tis my hand prepares
The garment of Life which the Deity wears!

FAUST. Thou, who around the wide world wendest,
Thou busy Spirit, how near I feel to thee!

SPIRIT. Thou'rt like the Spirit which thou comprehendest.
Not me! [Disappears.]

FAUST (*overwhelmed*). Not thee!
Whom then?
I, image of the Godhead!
Not even like thee!

[Here Wagner the "famulus" of Faust enters, and a long discussion ensues. Left alone once more, Faust considers the uselessness of life and resolves to take poison. The passage that follows is a portion of his meditation.]

Ye ancient tools, whose use I never knew,
Here, since my father used ye, still ye moulder:
Thou, ancient scroll, hast worn thy smoky hue
Since at this desk the dim lamp wont to smoulder.
'Twere better far, had I my little idly spent,
Than now to sweat beneath its burden, I confess it!
What from your fathers' heritage is lent,

Earn it anew, to really possess it!
 What serves not, is a sore impediment:
 The Moment's need creates the thing to serve and bless it!

Yet, wherefore turns my gaze to yonder point so lightly?
 Is yonder flask a magnet for mine eyes?
 Whence, all around me, glows the air so brightly,
 As when in woods at night the mellow moonbeam lies?

I hail thee, wondrous, rarest vial!
 I take thee down devoutly, for the trial:
 Man's art and wit I venerate in thee.
 Thou summary of gentle slumber-juices,
 Essence of deadly finest powers and uses,
 Unto thy master show thy favour free!
 I see thee, and the stings of pain diminish;
 I grasp thee, and my struggles slowly finish:
 My spirit's flood-tide ebbeth more and more.
 Out on the open ocean speeds my dreaming;
 The glassy flood before my feet is gleaming,
 A new day beckons to a newer shore!...

And now come down, thou cup of crystal clearest!
 Fresh from thine ancient cover thou appearest....
 Here is a juice whence sleep is swiftly born.
 It fills with browner flood thy crystal hollow;
 I chose, prepared it: thus I follow,—
 With all my soul the final drink I swallow,
 A solemn festal cup, a greeting to the morn!

[He sets the goblet to his mouth. Chime of bells and choral song.]

CHORUS OF ANGELS. Christ is arisen!

Joy to the Mortal One,
 Whom the unmerited,
 Clinging, inherited
 Needs did imprison.

FAUST. What hollow humming, what a sharp, clear stroke,
 Drives from my lip the goblet's, at their meeting?
 Announce the booming bells already woke
 The first glad hour of Easter's festal greeting?

Ye choirs, have ye begun the sweet, consoling chant,
Which, through the night of Death, the angels ministrant
Sang, God's new Covenant repeating?

CHORUS OF WOMEN. With spices and precious

Balm, we arrayed Him;
Faithful and gracious,
We tenderly laid Him:
Linen to bind Him
Cleanlily wound we:
Ah! when we would find Him,
Christ no more found we!

CHORUS OF ANGELS. Christ is ascended!

Bliss hath invested Him,—
Woes that molested Him,
Trials that tested Him,
Gloriously ended!

FAUST. Why, here in dust, entice me with your spell,
Ye gentle, powerful sounds of Heaven?
Peal rather there, where tender natures dwell.
Your messages I hear, but faith has not been given;
The dearest child of Faith is Miracle.
I venture not to soar to yonder regions
Whence the glad tidings hither float;
And yet, from childhood up, familiar with the note,
To Life it now renews the old allegiance.
Once Heavenly Love sent down a burning kiss
Upon my brow, in Sabbath silence holy;
And, filled with mystic presage, chimed the church-bell slowly,
And prayer dissolved me in a fervent bliss.
A sweet, uncomprehended yearning
Drove forth my feet through woods and meadows free,
And while a thousand tears were burning,
I felt a world arise for me.
These chants, to youth and all its sports appealing,
Proclaimed the Spring's rejoicing holiday;
And Memory holds me now, with childish feeling,
Back from the last, the solemn way.
Sound on, ye hymns of Heaven, so sweet and mild!
My tears gush forth: the Earth takes back her child!

CHORUS OF DISCIPLES. Has He, victoriously,
 Burst from the vaulted
 Grave, and all-gloriously
 Now sits exalted?
 Is He, in glow of birth,
 Rapture creative near?
 Ah! to the woe of earth
 Still are we native here.
 We, His aspiring
 Followers, Him we miss;
 Weeping, desiring,
 Master, Thy bliss!

CHORUS OF ANGELS. Christ is arisen,
 Out of Corruption's womb:
 Burst ye the prison,
 Break from your gloom!
 Praising and pleading Him,
 Lovingly needing Him,
 Brotherly feeding Him,
 Preaching and speeding Him,
 Blessing, succeeding Him,
 Thus is the Master near,—
 Thus is He here!

[When Easter-day has come, Faust and his servant go forth into the bright spring sunshine, and mingle with the crowd of citizens, soldiers, students, girls and peasants engaged in festal pleasures. Presently Faust notices a mysterious black dog moving about him in ever narrowing circles until at last it comes to his feet and follows him home. Once more alone in his study, Faust meditates on the mystery of life; but is continually disturbed by the strange behaviour of the black dog. The philosopher is now certain that what seems a dog is really a Spirit, and pronounces a magic invocation that destroys the disguise. A great mist fills the study, and when it dissipates, Mephistopheles appears in the costume of a Travelling Scholar.]

MEPHIS. Why such a noise? What are my lord's commands?

FAUST. This was the poodle's real core,
 A travelling scholar, then? The *casus* is diverting.

MEPHIS. The learned gentleman I bow before:
 You've made me roundly sweat, that's certain!

FAUST. What is thy name?

MEPHIS. A question small it seems,
For one whose mind the Word so much despises;
Who, scorning all external gleams,
The depths of being only prizes.

FAUST. With all you gentlemen, the name's a test,
Whereby the nature usually is expressed.
Clearly the latter it implies
In names like Beelzebub, Destroyer, Father of Lies.
Who art thou, then?

MEPHIS. Part of that Power, not understood,
Which always wills the Bad, and always works the Good.

FAUST. What hidden sense in this enigma lies?

MEPHIS. I am the Spirit that Denies!
And justly so: for all things, from the Void
Called forth, deserve to be destroyed:
'Twere better, then, were naught created.
Thus, all which you as Sin have rated,—
Destruction,—ought with Evil blent,—
That is my proper element.

FAUST. Thou nam'st thyself a part, yet show'st complete to me?

MEPHIS. ... Part of the Part am I, once All, in primal Night,—
Part of the Darkness which brought forth the Light,
The haughty Light, which now disputes the space,
And claims of Mother Night her ancient place. ...

FAUST. I see the plan thou art pursuing:
Thou canst not compass general ruin,
And hast on smaller scale begun.

MEPHIS. And truly 'tis not much, when all is done. ...
Might I, perhaps, depart at present?

FAUST. Why thou shouldst ask, I don't perceive.
Though our acquaintance is so recent,
For further visits thou hast leave.
The window's here, the door is yonder;
A chimney, also, you behold.

MEPHIS. I must confess that forth I may not wander,
My steps by one slight obstacle controlled,—
The wizard's-foot, that on your threshold made is.

FAUST. The pentagram prohibits thee?
Why, tell me now, thou Son of Hades,

If that prevents, how cam'st thou in to me?
Could such a spirit be so cheated?

MEPHIS. Inspect the thing: the drawing's not completed.
The outer angle, you may see,
Is open left—the lines don't fit it.

FAUST. Well,—Chance, this time, has fairly hit it!
And thus, thou'rt prisoner to me?
It seems the business has succeeded.

MEPHIS. The poodle naught remarked, as after thee he speeded;
But other aspects now obtain:
The Devil can't get out again.

FAUST. Try, then, the open window-pane!

MEPHIS. For Devils and for spectres this is law:
Where they have entered in, there also they withdraw.
The first is free to us; we're governed by the second.

FAUST. In Hell itself, then, laws are reckoned?
That's well! So might a compact be
Made with you gentlemen—and binding,—surely?

MEPHIS. All that is promised shall delight thee purely;
No skinflint bargain shalt thou see.
But this is not of swift conclusion;
We'll talk about the matter soon.
And now, I do entreat this boon—
Leave to withdraw from my intrusion.

FAUST. One moment more I ask thee to remain,
Some pleasant news, at least, to tell me.

MEPHIS. Release me, now! I soon shall come again;
Then thou, at will, may'st question and compel me.

FAUST. I have not snares around thee cast;
Thyself hast led thyself into the meshes.
Who traps the Devil, hold him fast!
Not soon a second time he'll catch a prey so precious.

MEPHIS. An't please thee, also I'm content to stay,
And serve thee in a social station;
But stipulating, that I may
With arts of mine afford thee recreation.

FAUST. Thereto I willingly agree,
If the diversion pleasant be.

[Mephistopheles causes Faust to fall into a deep slumber and having summoned rats and mice to eat away a corner of the magic pentagram and so destroy its charm, departs, but presently returns in another form.]

FAUST. A knock? Come in! Again my quiet broken?

MEPHIS. 'Tis I!

FAUST. Come in!

MEPHIS. Thrice must the words be spoken.

FAUST. Come in, then!

MEPHIS. Thus thou pleasest me.

I hope we'll suit each other well;
For now, thy vapours to dispel,
I come, a squire of high degree,
In scarlet coat, with golden trimming,
A cloak in silken lustre swimming,
A tall cock's feather in my hat,
A long, sharp sword for show or quarrel,—
And I advise thee, brief and flat,
To don the self-same gay apparel,
That, from this den released, and free,
Life be at last revealed to thee!

FAUST. This life of earth, whatever my attire,
Would pain me in its wonted fashion.
Too old am I to play with passion;
Too young, to be without desire.
What from the world have I to gain?
Thou shalt abstain—renounce—refrain!
Such is the everlasting song
That in the ears of all men rings,—
That unrelieved, our whole life long,
Each hour, in passing, hoarsely sings. . . .
So, by the burden of my days oppressed,
Death is desired, and Life a thing unblest!

[Mephistopheles offers to be guide and servant to Faust and to satisfy all his desires. Faust wishes to know what service he, in his turn, must render.]

MEPHIS. *Here*, an unwearied slave, I'll wear thy tether,
And to thine every nod obedient be:
When *There* again we come together,
Then shalt thou do the same for me.

FAUST. The *There* my scruples naught increases.
When thou hast dashed this world to pieces,
The others, then, its place may fill.
Here, on this earth, my pleasures have their sources;
Yon sun beholds my sorrows in his courses;
And when from these my life itself divorces,
Let happen all that can or will! . . .

MEPHIS. In this sense, even, canst thou venture.
Come, bind thyself by prompt indenture,
And thou mine arts with joy shalt see:
What no man ever saw, I'll give to thee.

FAUST. Canst thou, poor Devil, give me whatsoever?
When was a human soul, in its supreme endeavour,
E'er understood by such as thou?
Yet, hast thou food which never satiates, now,—
The restless, ruddy gold hast thou,
That runs, quicksilver-like, one's fingers through,—
A game whose winnings no man ever knew,— . . .
Show me the fruits that, ere they're gathered, rot,
And trees that daily with new leafage clothe them!

MEPHIS. Such a demand alarms me not:
Such treasures have I, and can show them.
But still the time may reach us, good my friend,
When peace we crave and more luxurious diet.

FAUST. When on an idler's bed I stretch myself in quiet,
There let, at once, my record end!
Canst thou with lying flattery rule me,
Until, self-pleased, myself I see,—
Canst thou with rich enjoyment fool me,
Let that day be the last for me!
The bet I offer.

MEPHIS. Done!

FAUST. And heartily!
When thus I hail the Moment flying:
"Ah, still delay—thou art so fair!"
Then bind me in thy bonds undying,
My final ruin then declare!
Then let the death-bell chime the token,
Then art thou from thy service free!

The clock may stop, the hand be broken,
Then Time be finished unto me!

MEPHIS. Consider well: my memory good is rated.

FAUST. Thou hast a perfect right thereto.

My powers I have not rashly estimated:

A slave am I, whate'er I do—

If thine, or whose? 'tis needless to debate it.

MEPHIS. Then at the Doctors'-banquet I, to-day,
Will as a servant wait behind thee.

But one thing more! Beyond all risk to bind thee,

Give me a line or two, I pray.

FAUST. Demand'st thou, Pedant, too, a document?...

What wilt from me, Base Spirit, say?—

Brass, marble, parchment, paper, clay?

The terms with graver, quill, or chisel, stated?

I freely leave the choice to thee.

MEPHIS. Why heat thyself, thus instantly,

With eloquence exaggerated?

Each leaf for such a pact is good;

And to subscribe thy name thou'lt take a drop of blood.

FAUST. If thou therewith art fully satisfied,

So let us by the farce abide.

MEPHIS. Blood is a juice of rarest quality.

FAUST. Fear not that I this pact shall seek to sever!

The promise that I make to thee

Is just the sum of my endeavour.

[Faust promises himself to compass all human knowledge and delight, but Mephistopheles reminds him that, whatever he does, he will still remain himself. A travelling student here comes to consult Faust, who withdraws, while Mephistopheles assumes his form and subtly counsels the student to do evil. The amazed youth departs, and Faust returns.]

FAUST. Now, whither shall we go?

MEPHIS.

As best it pleases thee,

The little world, and then the great, we'll see.

With what delight, what profit winning,

Shalt thou sponge through the term beginning!

FAUST. Yet with the flowing beard I wear,

Both ease and grace will fail me there.

The attempt, indeed, were a futile strife;

I never could learn the ways of life.
 I feel so small before others, and thence
 Should always find embarrassments.

MEPHIS. My friend, thou soon shalt lose all such misgiving:
 Be thou but self-possessed, thou hast the art of living!

FAUST. How shall we leave the house, and start?
 Where hast thou servant, coach and horses?

MEPHIS. We'll spread this cloak with proper art,
 Then through the air direct our courses.

But only, on so bold a flight,
 Be sure to have thy luggage light.
 A little burning air, which I shall soon prepare us,
 Above the earth will nimbly bear us,
 And, if we're light, we'll travel swift and clear:
 I gratulate thee on thy new career!

MARLOWE

A MUCH earlier play on the Faust legend is *The Tragical History of Dr Faustus* by Christopher Marlowe (1564-93), an English dramatist born at Canterbury and educated there and at Cambridge. His blank verse plays, *Tamburlaine*, *Faustus*, *The Jew of Malta* and *Edward II* (his finest work) had great influence on Shakespeare. His poem, *Hero and Leander* and the song "Come live with me and be my love" are both quoted by Shakespeare, the first in *As You Like It*, the second in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Marlowe led a wild life, and, at the early age of twenty-nine, was stabbed in a drunken quarrel at Deptford. The passage that follows is the last scene of *Dr Faustus*. The texts of Marlowe's play differ in the different quartos.

DR FAUSTUS

Faustus—the night of his death. Wagner, his Servant.

FAUST. Say, Wagner, thou hast perused my will,
 How dost thou like it?

WAG. Sir, so wondrous well,
 As in all humble duty I do yield
 My life and lasting service for your love.

FAUST. Gramercies, Wagner.

[Exit.

Three Scholars enter.

Welcome, Gentlemen.

FIRST SCH. Now, worthy Faustus, methinks your looks are
 chang'd.

FAUST. Ah, Gentlemen.

SEC. SCH. What ails Faustus?

FAUST. Ah, my sweet chamber-fellow, had I lived with thee, then had I lived still, but now must I die eternally. Look, Sirs, comes he not? comes he not?

FIRST SCH. Oh my dear Faustus, what imports this fear?

SEC. SCH. Is all our pleasure turned to melancholy?

THIRD SCH. He is not well with being over solitary.

SEC. SCH. If it be so, we will have physicians, and Faustus shall be cured.

THIRD SCH. 'Tis but a surfeit, Sir; fear nothing.

FAUST. A surfeit of deadly sin that hath damned both body and soul.

SEC. SCH. Yet, Faustus, look up to heaven; remember God's mercy is infinite.

FAUST. But Faustus' offence can ne'er be pardoned. The serpent that tempted Eve may be saved, but not Faustus. O Gentlemen, hear me with patience, and tremble not at my speeches! Though my heart pants and quivers to remember that I have been a student here these thirty years, oh, would I had ne'er seen Wittenburg, never read book! and what wonders I have done, all Germany can witness, yea, all the world: for which, Faustus hath lost both Germany and the world: yea, heaven itself, heaven, the seat of God, the throne of the blessed, the kingdom of joy, and must remain in hell for ever, Hell, ah, Hell, for ever. Sweet friends, what shall become of Faustus being in Hell for ever?

SEC. SCH. Yet, Faustus, call on God.

FAUST. On God, whom Faustus hath abjured? on God, whom Faustus hath blasphemed? O my God, I would weep, but the devil draws in my tears. Gush forth blood instead of tears, yea life and soul. Oh, he stays my tongue: I would lift up my hands, but see, they hold 'em, they hold 'em.

SCHOLARS. Who, Faustus?

FAUST. Why, Lucifer and Mephistophilis. O gentlemen, I gave them my soul for my cunning.

SCHOLARS. God forbid!

FAUST. God forbade it indeed, but Faustus hath done it: for the vain pleasure of four-and-twenty years hath Faustus lost eternal joy and felicity. I writ them a bill with mine own blood, the date is expired; this is the time, and he will fetch me.

FIRST SCH. Why did not Faustus tell us of this before, that Divines might have prayed for thee?

FAUST. Oft have I thought to have done so; but the devil threatened to tear me in pieces if I named God; to fetch me body and soul if I once gave ear to divinity; and now 'tis too late. Gentlemen, away lest you perish with me.

SEC. SCH. O what may we do to save Faustus?

FAUST. Talk not of me, but save yourselves, and depart.

THIRD SCH. God will strengthen me, I will stay with Faustus.

FIRST SCH. Tempt not God, sweet friend, but let us into the next room and pray for him.

FAUST. Aye, pray for me, pray for me; and what noise soever ye hear, come not unto me, for nothing can rescue me.

SEC. SCH. Pray thou, and we will pray, that God may have mercy upon thee.

FAUST. Gentlemen, farewell; if I live till morning, I'll visit you: if not—Faustus is gone to hell.

SCHOLARS. Faustus, farewell.

Faustus alone.—The clock strikes eleven.

FAUST. O Faustus,

Now hast thou but one bare hour to live,

And then thou must be damn'd perpetually.

Stand still you ever-moving spheres of heaven,

That time may cease, and midnight never come.

Fair Nature's eye, rise, rise again, and make

Perpetual day: or let this hour be but

A year, a month, a week, a natural day,

That Faustus may repent and save his soul.

O lente, lente, currite noctis equi.

The stars move still, time runs, the clock will strike,

The devil will come, and Faustus must be damned.

O I will leap to my God! Who pulls me down?

See where Christ's blood streams in the firmament:

One drop of blood would save my soul—half a drop: ah, my Christ!

Ah, rend not my heart for naming of my Christ!
 Yet will I call on him: O spare me, Lucifer.—
 Where is it now? 'tis gone; and see where God
 Stretcheth out his arm, and bends his ireful brows!
 Mountains and hills come, come, and fall on me,
 And hide me from the heavy wrath of God!
 No! no! Then will I headlong run into the earth:
 Gape, earth. O no, it will not harbour me.
 You stars that reign'd at my nativity,
 Whose influence have allotted death and hell,
 Now draw up Faustus like a foggy mist
 Into the entrails of yon labouring cloud;
 That when you vomit forth into the air,
 My limbs may issue from your smoky mouths,
 So that my soul may but ascend to heaven.

The Clock strikes the half-hour.

O half the hour is past: 'twill all be past anon!
 O God!

If thou wilt not have mercy on my soul,
 Yet for Christ's sake whose blood hath ransomed me,
 Impose some end to my incessant pain.
 Let Faustus live in hell a thousand years,
 A hundred thousand, and at last be saved:
 O, no end is limited to damnéd souls.
 Why wert thou not a creature wanting soul?
 Or why is this immortal that thou hast?
 Oh, Pythagoras' Metempsychosis! were that true,
 This soul should fly from me, and I be changed
 Into some brutish beast. All beasts are happy,
 For when they die,
 Their souls are soon dissolv'd in elements:
 But mine must live still to be plagu'd in hell.
 Curs'd be the parents that engender'd me:
 No Faustus, curse thyself, curse Lucifer,
 That hath depriv'd thee of the joys of heaven.

The Clock strikes Twelve.

It strikes, it strikes; now, body, turn to air,

Or Lucifer will bear thee quick to hell.
 O soul, be chang'd into small water drops,
 And fall into the ocean; ne'er be found.

Thunder, and enter the Devils.

My God! my God! look not so fierce on me.
 Adders and serpents, let me breathe awhile:
 Ugly hell gape not; come not Lucifer:
 I'll burn my books: Oh Mephistophilis!

Enter Scholars.

FIRST SCH. Come gentlemen, let us go visit Faustus,
 For such a dreadful night was never seen
 Since first the world's creation did begin;
 Such fearful shrieks and cries were never heard.
 Pray heaven the Doctor have escaped the danger.

SEC. SCH. O help us heavens! see here are Faustus' limbs
 All torn asunder by the hand of death.

THIRD SCH. The devil whom Faustus serv'd hath torn him thus:
 For 'twixt the hours of twelve and one, methought
 I heard him shriek, and call aloud for help;
 At which self time the house seem'd all on fire
 With dreadful horror of these damnéd fiends.

SEC. SCH. Well, gentlemen, though Faustus' end be such
 As every Christian heart laments to think on,
 Yet, for he was a scholar once admired
 For wondrous knowledge in our German schools,
 We'll give his mangled limbs due burial:
 And all the scholars, cloth'd in mourning black,
 Shall wait upon his heavy funeral.

Enter Chorus.

Cut is the branch that might have grown full straight,
 And burnéd is Apollo's laurel bough
 That sometime grew within this learned man.
 Faustus is gone! Regard his hellish fall,
 Whose fiendful fortune may exhort the wise
 Only to wonder at unlawful things,
 Whose deepness doth entice such forward wits
 To practise more than heavenly power permits.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850-94) was born at Edinburgh and educated at the university there. His father and grandfather were lighthouse engineers, and, by many cruises with them Louis gained much of that knowledge of the sea which is shown in his books. His tales of adventure, *Treasure Island*, *Kidnapped*, *Catriona* and *The Black Arrow* are known to thousands of readers; and the same may be said of the ever delightful *A Child's Garden of Verses*. Other books by him are *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, *New Arabian Nights* and *The Merry Men*, little holiday books—*An Inland Voyage* and *Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes*, books of essays—*Virginibus Puerisque*, *Memories and Portraits* and *Across the Plains*, and the volumes of his delightful letters. Stevenson suffered from consumption and was compelled to live abroad for several years. He died in Samoa. The passage that follows is taken from *Travels with a Donkey*, a delightful book describing a holiday spent by Stevenson in tramping through the Cevennes with a donkey, Modestine, whose part in the proceedings it was to carry the camping equipment.

A CAMP IN THE DARK

The next day (Tuesday, September 24th), it was two o'clock in the afternoon before I got my journal written up and my knapsack repaired, for I was determined to carry my knapsack in the future and have no more ado with baskets; and half an hour afterwards I set out for Le Cheylard l'Évêque, a place on the borders of the forest of Mercoire. A man, I was told, should walk there in an hour and a half; and I thought it scarce too ambitious to suppose that a man encumbered with a donkey might cover the same distance in four hours.

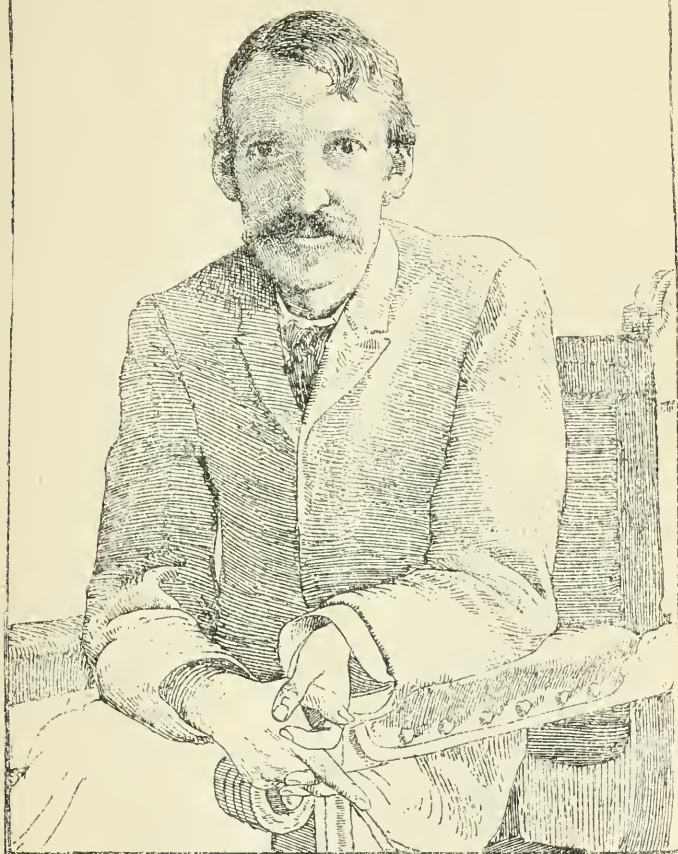
All the way up the long hill from Langogne it rained and hailed alternately; the wind kept freshening steadily, although slowly; plentiful hurrying clouds—some dragging veils of straight rain-shower, others massed and luminous as though promising snow—careered out of the north and followed me along my way. I was soon out of the cultivated basin of the Allier, and away from the ploughing oxen, and such-like sights of the country. Moor, heathery marsh, tracts of rock and pines, woods of birch all jewelled with the autumn yellow, here and there a few naked cottages and bleak fields,—these were the characters of the country. Hill and valley followed valley and hill; the little green and stony cattle-tracks wandered in and out of one another, split

into three or four, died away in marshy hollows, and began again sporadically on hillsides or at the borders of a wood.

There was no direct road to Cheylard, and it was no easy affair to make a passage in this uneven country and through this intermittent labyrinth of tracks. It must have been about four when I struck Sagnerousse, and went on my way rejoicing in a sure point of departure. Two hours afterwards, the dusk rapidly falling, in a lull of the wind, I issued from a fir-wood where I had long been wandering, and found, not the looked-for village, but another marish bottom among rough-and-tumble hills. For some time past I had heard the ringing of cattle-bells ahead; and now, as I came out of the skirts of the wood, I saw near upon a dozen cows and perhaps as many more black figures, which I conjectured to be children, although the mist had almost unrecognisably exaggerated their forms. These were all silently following each other round and round in a circle, now taking hands, now breaking up with chains and reverences. A dance of children appeals to very innocent and lively thoughts; but, at nightfall on the marshes, the thing was eerie and fantastic to behold. Even I, who am well enough read in Herbert Spencer, felt a sort of silence fall for an instant on my mind. The next I was pricking Modestine forward, and guiding her like an unruly ship through the open. In a path, she went doggedly ahead of her own accord, as before a fair wind; but once on the turf or among heather, and the brute became demented. The tendency of lost travellers to go round in a circle was developed in her to the degree of passion, and it took all the steering I had in me to keep even a decently straight course through a single field.

While I was thus desperately tacking through the bog, children and cattle began to disperse, until only a pair of girls remained behind. From these I sought direction on my path. The peasantry in general were but little disposed to counsel a wayfarer. One old devil simply retired into his house, and barricaded the door on my approach; and I might beat and shout myself hoarse, he turned a deaf ear. Another, having given me a direction which, as I found afterwards, I had misunderstood, complacently watched me going wrong without adding a sign. He did not care a stalk of parsley if I wandered all night upon the hills! As for these two girls, they were a pair of impudent sly sluts, with not a thought

W.S.



ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

William Strang

but mischief. One put out her tongue at me, the other bade me follow the cows, and they both giggled and jogged each other's elbows. The Beast of Gévaudan ate about a hundred children of this district; I began to think of him with sympathy.

Leaving the girls, I pushed on through the bog, and got into another wood and upon a well-marked road. It grew darker and darker. Modestine, suddenly beginning to smell mischief, bettered the pace of her own accord, and from that time forward gave me no trouble. It was the first sign of intelligence I had occasion to remark in her. At the same time, the wind freshened into half a gale, and another heavy discharge of rain came flying up out of the north. At the other side of the wood I sighted some red windows in the dusk. This was the hamlet of Fouzilhic; three houses on a hillside, near a wood of birches. Here I found a delightful old man, who came a little way with me in the rain to put me safely on the road for Cheylard. He would hear of no reward, but shook his hands above his head almost as if in menace, and refused volubly and shrilly, in unmitigated *patois*.

All seemed right at last. My thoughts began to turn upon dinner and a fireside, and my heart was agreeably softened in my bosom. Alas, and I was on the brink of new and greater miseries. Suddenly, at a single swoop, the night fell. I have been abroad in many a black night, but never in a blacker. A glimmer of rocks, a glimmer of the track where it was well beaten, a certain fleecy density, or night within night, for a tree,—this was all that I could discriminate. The sky was simply darkness overhead; even the flying clouds pursued their way invisibly to human eyesight. I could not distinguish my hand at arm's-length from the track, nor my goad, at the same distance, from the meadows or the sky.

Soon the road that I was following split, after the fashion of the country, into three or four in a piece of rocky meadow. Since Modestine had shown such a fancy for beaten roads, I tried her instinct in this predicament. But the instinct of an ass is what might be expected from the name; in half a minute she was clambering round and round among some boulders, as lost a donkey as you would wish to see. I should have camped long before had I been properly provided; but as this was to be so short a stage, I had brought no wine, no bread for myself, and little over a pound for my lady friend. Add to this, that I and

Modestine were both handsomely wetted by the showers. But now, if I could have found some water, I should have camped at once in spite of all. Water, however, being entirely absent, except in the form of rain, I determined to return to Fouzilhic, and ask a guide a little farther on my way—"a little farther lend thy guiding hand."

The thing was easy to decide, hard to accomplish. In this sensible roaring blackness I was sure of nothing but the direction of the wind. To this I set my face. The road had disappeared, and I went across country, now in marshy opens, now baffled by walls unscalable to Modestine, until I came once more in sight of some red windows. This time they were differently disposed. It was not Fouzilhic, but Fouzilhac, a hamlet little distant from the other in space, but worlds away in the spirit of its inhabitants. I tied Modestine to a gate, and groped forward, stumbling among rocks, plunging mid-leg in bog, until I gained the entrance of the village. In the first lighted house there was a woman who would not open to me. She could do nothing, she cried to me through the door, being alone and lame; but if I would apply at the next house, there was a man who could help me if he had a mind.

They came to the next door in force, a man, two women, and a girl, and brought a pair of lanterns to examine the wayfarer. The man was not ill-looking, but had a shifty smile. He leaned against the doorpost, and heard me state my case. All I asked was a guide as far as Cheylard.

"*C'est que, voyez-vous, il fait noir,*" said he.

I told him that was just my reason for requiring help.

"I understand that," said he, looking uncomfortable; "*mais—c'est—de la peine.*"

I was willing to pay, I said. He shook his head. I rose as high as ten francs; but he continued to shake his head.

"Name your own price, then," said I.

"*Ce n'est pas ça,*" he said at length, and with evident difficulty; "but I am not going to cross the door—*mais je ne sortirai pas de la porte.*"

I grew a little warm, and asked him what he proposed that I should do.

"Where are you going beyond Cheylard?" he asked by way of answer.

"That is no affair of yours," I returned, for I was not going to indulge his bestial curiosity; "it changes nothing in my present predicament."

"*C'est vrai, ça*," he acknowledged, with a laugh; "*oui, c'est vrai. Et d'où venez-vous?*"

A better man than I might have felt nettled.

"Oh," said I, "I am not going to answer any of your questions, so you may spare yourself the trouble of putting them. I am late enough already; I want help. If you will not guide me yourself, at least help me to find someone else who will."

"Hold on," he cried suddenly. "Was it not you who passed in the meadow while it was still day?"

"Yes, yes," said the girl, whom I had not hitherto recognised; "it was monsieur; I told him to follow the cow."

"As for you, mademoiselle," said I, "you are a *farceuse*."

"And," added the man, "what the devil have you done to be still here?"

What the devil, indeed! But there I was.

"The great thing," said I, "is to make an end of it"; and once more proposed that he should help me to find a guide.

"*C'est que*," he said again, "*c'est que—il fait noir*."

"Very well," said I; "take one of your lanterns."

"No," he cried, drawing a thought backward, and again intrenching himself behind one of his former phrases; "I will not cross the door."

I looked at him. I saw unaffected terror struggling on his face with unaffected shame; he was smiling pitifully and wetting his lip with his tongue, like a detected schoolboy. I drew a brief picture of my state, and asked him what I was to do.

"I don't know," he said; "I will not cross the door."

Here was the Beast of Gévaudan, and no mistake.

"Sir," said I, with my most commanding manners, "you are a coward."

And with that I turned my back upon the family party, who hastened to retire within their fortifications; and the famous door was closed again, but not till I had overheard the sound of laughter. *Filia barbara pater barbarior*. Let me say it in the plural: the Beasts of Gévaudan.

The lanterns had somewhat dazzled me, and I ploughed

distressfully among stones and rubbish-heaps. All the other houses in the village were both dark and silent; and though I knocked at here and there a door, my knocking was unanswered. It was a bad business; I gave up Fouzilhac with my curses. The rain had stopped, and the wind, which still kept rising, began to dry my coat and trousers. "Very well," thought I, "water or no water, I must camp." But the first thing was to return to Modestine. I am pretty sure I was twenty minutes groping for my lady in the dark; and if it had not been for the unkindly services of the bog, into which I once more stumbled, I might have still been groping for her at the dawn. My next business was to gain the shelter of a wood, for the wind was cold as well as boisterous. How, in this well-wooded district, I should have been so long in finding one, is another of the insoluble mysteries of this day's adventures; but I will take my oath that I put near an hour to the discovery.

At last black trees began to show upon my left, and, suddenly crossing the road, made a cave of unmitigated blackness right in front. I call it a cave without exaggeration; to pass below that arch of leaves was like entering a dungeon. I felt about until my hand encountered a stout branch, and to this I tied Modestine, a haggard, drenched, desponding donkey. Then I lowered my pack, laid it along the wall on the margin of the road, and unbuckled the straps. I knew well enough where the lantern was; but where were the candles? I groped and groped among the tumbled articles, and, while I was thus groping, suddenly I touched the spirit-lamp. Salvation! This would serve my turn as well. The wind roared unwearyingly among the trees; I could hear the boughs tossing and the leaves churning through half a mile of forest; yet the scene of my encampment was not only as black as the pit, but admirably sheltered. At the second match the wick caught flame. The light was both livid and shifting; but it cut me off from the universe, and doubled the darkness of the surrounding night.

I tied Modestine more conveniently for herself, and broke up half the black bread for her supper, reserving the other half against the morning. Then I gathered what I should want within reach, took off my wet boots and gaiters, which I wrapped in my waterproof, arranged my knapsack for a pillow under the flap of my

sleeping-bag, insinuated my limbs into the interior, and buckled myself in like a *bambino*. I opened a tin of Bologna sausage and broke a cake of chocolate, and that was all I had to eat. It may sound offensive, but I ate them together, bite by bite, by way of bread and meat. All I had to wash down this revolting mixture was neat brandy: a revolting beverage in itself. But I was rare and hungry; ate well, and smoked one of the best cigarettes in my experience. Then I put a stone in my straw hat, pulled the flap of my fur cap over my neck and eyes, put my revolver ready to my hand, and snuggled well down among the sheepskins.

I questioned at first if I were sleepy, for I felt my heart beating faster than usual, as if with an agreeable excitement to which my mind remained a stranger. But as soon as my eye-lids touched, that subtle glue leaped between them, and they would no more come separate. The wind among the trees was my lullaby. Sometimes it sounded for minutes together with a steady, even rush, not rising nor abating; and again it would swell and burst like a great crashing breaker, and the trees would patter me all over with big drops from the rain of the afternoon. Night after night, in my own bedroom in the country, I have given ear to this perturbing concert of the wind among the woods; but whether it was a difference in the trees, or the lie of the ground, or because I was myself outside and in the midst of it, the fact remains that the wind sang to a different tune among these woods of Gévaudan. I hearkened and hearkened: and meanwhile sleep took gradual possession of my body and subdued my thoughts and senses; but still my last waking effort was to listen and distinguish, and my last conscious state was one of wonder at the foreign clamour in my ears.

Twice in the course of the dark hours—once when a stone galled me underneath the sack, and again when the poor patient Modestine, growing angry, pawed and stamped upon the road—I was recalled for a brief while to consciousness, and saw a star or two overhead, and the lace-like edge of the foliage against the sky. When I awoke for the third time (Wednesday, September 25th), the world was flooded with a blue light, the mother of the dawn. I saw the leaves labouring in the wind and the ribbon of the road; and, on turning my head, there was Modestine tied to a beech, and standing half across the path in an attitude of inimitable

patience. I closed my eyes again, and set to thinking over the experience of the night. I was surprised to find how easy and pleasant it had been, even in this tempestuous weather. The stone which annoyed me would not have been there, had I not been forced to camp blindfold in the opaque night; and I had felt no other inconvenience, except when my feet encountered the lantern or the second volume of Peyrat's *Pastors of the Desert* among the mixed contents of my sleeping-bag; nay, more, I had felt not a touch of cold, and awakened with unusually lightsome and clear sensations.

With that, I shook myself, got once more into my boots and gaiters, and, breaking up the rest of the bread for Modestine, strolled about to see in what part of the world I had awakened. Ulysses, left on Ithaca, and with a mind unsettled by the goddess, was not more pleasantly astray. I have been after an adventure all my life, a pure dispassionate adventure, such as befell early and heroic voyagers: and thus to be found by morning in a random woodside nook in Gévaudan—not knowing north from south, as strange to my surroundings as the first man upon the earth, an inland castaway—was to find a fraction of my day-dreams realised. I was on the skirts of a little wood of birch, sprinkled with a few beeches; behind, it adjoined another wood of fir; and in front, it broke up and went down in open order into a shallow and meadowy dale. All round there were bare hilltops, some near, some far away, as the perspective closed or opened, but none apparently much higher than the rest. The wind huddled the trees. The golden specks of autumn in the birches tossed shiveringly. Overhead the sky was full of strings and shreds of vapour, flying, vanishing, reappearing, and turning about an axis like tumblers, as the wind hounded them through heaven. It was wild weather and famishing cold. I ate some chocolate, swallowed a mouthful of brandy, and smoked a cigarette before the cold should have time to disable my fingers. And by the time I had got all this done, and had made my pack and bound it on the pack-saddle, the day was tiptoe on the threshold of the east. We had not gone many steps along the lane, before the sun, still invisible to me, sent a glow of gold over some cloud mountains that lay ranged along the eastern sky.

The wind had us on the stern, and hurried us biting forward.

I buttoned myself into my coat, and walked on in a pleasant frame of mind with all men, when suddenly, at a corner, there was Fouzilhic once more in front of me. Nor only that, but there was the old gentleman who had escorted me so far the night before, running out of his house at sight of me, with hands upraised in horror.

"My poor boy!" he cried, "what does this mean?"

I told him what had happened. He beat his old hands like clappers in a mill, to think how lightly he had let me go; but when he heard of the man of Fouzilhac, anger and depression seized upon his mind.

"This time, at least," said he, "there shall be no mistake."

And he limped along, for he was very rheumatic, for about half a mile, and until I was almost within sight of Cheylard, the destination I had hunted for so long.

HOMER

Two great poems of the ancient world are the *Iliad*, which tells the story of the siege of Troy, and the *Odyssey*, which describes the wanderings of Odysseus or Ulysses after Troy had fallen. These great epics are supposed to have been written by a blind poet, Homer, living in a Greek settlement some eight hundred or a thousand years before Christ. Whether the poems were written by one man, or by several people in the form of separate ballad stories at different periods and then united by some man (or men) into the two great poems, are questions that have been hotly discussed. A celebrated English translation of Homer is that by George Chapman (1559?–1634) referred to in Keats's sonnet. Another version is by Alexander Pope (1688–1744). Tennyson translated a few lines of the *Iliad* as an experiment. Translations of the same passage by Chapman and Pope are added for the interest of comparison. The *Iliad* has been translated into fine prose by Andrew Lang, Walter Leaf and Ernest Myers, and the *Odyssey* by Andrew Lang and S. H. Butcher. Their version of the *Odyssey* is used here.

KEATS

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER

Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.

Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne;
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

FROM THE *ILIAD*

TRANSLATED BY TENNYSON

So Hector spake; the Trojans roar'd applause;
Then loosed their sweating horses from the yoke,
And each beside his chariot bound his own;
And oxen from the city, and goodly sheep
In haste they drove, and honey-hearted wine
And bread from out the houses brought, and heap'd
Their firewood, and the winds from off the plain
Roll'd the rich vapour far into the heaven.
And these all night upon the bridge of war
Sat glorying; many a fire before them blazed;
As when in heaven the stars about the moon
Look beautiful, when all the winds are laid,
And every height comes out, and jutting peak
And valley, and the immeasurable heavens
Break open to their highest, and all the stars
Shine, and the shepherd gladdens in his heart:
So many a fire between the ships and stream
Of Xanthus blazed before the towers of Troy,
A thousand on the plain; and close by each
Sat fifty in the blaze of burning fire;
And eating hoary grain and pulse the steeds,
Fixt by their cars, waited the golden dawn.

Iliad VIII. 542-561.

TRANSLATED BY GEORGE CHAPMAN

The winds transferr'd into the friendly sky
Their supper's savour; to the which they sate delightfully,
And spent all night in open field; fires round about them shin'd.
As when about the silver moon, when air is free from wind,
And stars shine clear, to whose sweet beams, high prospects, and
the brows
Of all steep hills and pinnacles, thrust up themselves for shows,
And even the lowly valleys joy to glitter in their sight,
When the unmeasur'd firmament bursts to disclose her light,
And all the signs in heaven are seen, that glad the shepherd's
heart;
So many fires disclos'd their beams, made by the Trojan part,
Before the face of Ilion, and her bright turrets show'd.
A thousand courts of guard kept fires, and every guard allow'd
Fifty stout men, by whom their horse ate oats and hard white
corn,
And all did wishfully expect the silver-thronéd morn.

TRANSLATED BY ALEXANDER POPE

The troops exulting sat in order round,
And beaming fires illumin'd all the ground.
As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night!
O'er heaven's pure azure spreads her sacred light,
When not a breath disturbs the deep serene,
And not a cloud o'ercasts the solemn scene,
Around her throne the vivid planets roll,
And stars unnumber'd gild the glowing pole,
O'er the dark trees a yellower verdure shed,
And tip with silver every mountain's head:
Then shine the vales, the rocks in prospect rise,
A flood of glory bursts from all the skies:
The conscious swains, rejoicing in the sight,
Eye the blue vault, and bless the useful light.
So many flames before proud Ilion blaze,
And lighten glimmering Xanthus with their rays.
The long reflections of the distant fires
Gleam on the walls, and tremble on the spires.

A thousand piles the dusky horrors gild,
And shoot a shady lustre o'er the field.
Full fifty guards each flaming pile attend,
Whose umber'd arms, by fits, thick flashes send,
Loud neigh the coursers o'er their heaps of corn,
And ardent warriors wait the rising morn.

FROM THE ODYSSEY

[After the fall of Troy, Odysseus (or Ulysses), lord of Ithaca, endeavours to make sail for his own land, but meets with many hindrances. He comes to the isle of the goddess Circe, who tells him that he must go to the fearful abode of the dead, the dwelling of mighty Hades and dread Persephone, to seek counsel from the spirit of the Theban sage, blind Teiresias.]

Now when we had gone down to the ship and to the sea, first of all we drew the ship unto the fair salt water, and placed the mast and sails in the black ship, and took those sheep and put them therein, and ourselves too climbed on board, sorrowing, and shedding big tears. And in the wake of our dark-prowed ship she sent a favouring wind that filled the sails, a kindly escort,—even Circe of the braided tresses, a dread goddess of human speech. And we set in order all the gear throughout the ship and sat us down; and the wind and our helmsman guided our barque. And all day long her sails were stretched in her seafaring; and the sun sank and all the ways were darkened. She came to the limits of the world, to the deep-flowing Oceanus. There is the land and the city of the Cimmerians, shrouded in mist and cloud, and never does the shining sun look down on them with his rays, neither when he climbs up the starry heavens, nor when again he turns earthward from the firmament, but deadly night is outspread over miserable mortals. Thither we came and ran the ship ashore and took out the sheep; but for our part we held on our way along the stream of Oceanus, till we came to the place which Circe had declared to us.

There Perimedes and Eurylochus held the victims, but I drew my sharp sword from my thigh, and dug a pit, as it were a cubit in length and breadth and about it poured a drink offering to all the dead, first with mead and thereafter with sweet wine, and for the third time with water. And I sprinkled white meal thereon, and entreated with many prayers the strengthless heads of the

dead, and promised that on my return to Ithaca I would offer in my halls a barren heifer, the best I had, and fill the pyre with treasure, and apart unto Teiresias alone sacrifice a black ram without spot, the fairest of my flock. But when I had besought the tribes of the dead with vows and prayers, I took the sheep and cut their throats over the trench, and the dark blood flowed forth, and lo, the spirits of the dead that be departed gathered them from out of Erebus. Brides and youths unwed, and old men of many and evil days, and tender maidens with grief yet fresh at heart; and many there were, wounded with bronze-shod spears, men slain in fight with their bloody mail about them. And these many ghosts flocked together from every side about the trench with a wondrous cry, and pale fear gat hold on me. Then did I speak to my company and command to flay the sheep that lay slain by the pitiless sword, and to consume them with fire, and to make prayer to the gods, to mighty Hades and to dread Persephone, and myself I drew the sharp sword from my thigh and sat there, suffering not the strengthless heads of the dead to draw nigh to the blood, ere I had word of Teiresias.

And first came the soul of Elpenor, my companion, that had not yet been buried beneath the wide-wayed earth; for we left the corpse behind us in the hall of Circe, unwept and unburied, seeing that another task was instant on us. At the sight of him I wept and had compassion on him, and uttering my voice spake to him winged words: "Elpenor, how hast thou come beneath the darkness and the shadow? Thou hast come fleeter on foot than I in my black ship."

So spake I, and with a moan he answered me, saying: "Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, an evil doom of some god was my bane and wine out of measure. When I laid me down on the house-top of Circe, I minded me not to descend again by the way of the tall ladder, but fell right down from the roof, and my neck was broken off from the bones of the spine, and my spirit went down to the house of Hades. And now I pray thee in the name of those whom we left, who are no more with us, thy wife, and thy sire who cherished thee when as yet thou wert a little one, and Telemachus whom thou didst leave in thy halls alone; forasmuch as I know that on thy way hence from out the dwelling of Hades, thou wilt stay thy well-wrought ship

at the isle Aeaean, even then, my lord, I charge thee to think on me. Leave me not unwept and unburied as thou goest hence, nor turn thy back on me, lest haply I bring on thee the anger of the gods. Nay, burn me there with mine armour, all that is mine, and pile me a barrow on the shore of the grey sea, the grave of a luckless man, that even men unborn may hear my story. Fulfil me this and plant upon the barrow mine oar, wherewith I rowed in the days of my life, while yet I was among my fellows."

Even so he spake, and I answered him saying: "All this, luckless man, will I perform for thee and do."

Even so we twain were sitting holding sad discourse, I on the one side, stretching forth my sword over the blood, while on the other side the ghost of my friend told all his tale.

Anon came up the soul of my mother dead, Anticleia, the daughter of Autolycus the great-hearted, whom I left alive when I departed for sacred Ilios. At the sight of her I wept, and was moved with compassion, yet even so, for all my sore grief, I suffered her not to draw nigh to the blood, ere I had word of Teiresias.

[Odysseus sees the sage Teiresias, who tells him what he must do in order to gain the shores of Ithaca. After this the mother of Odysseus draws near and thus addresses him.]

"Dear child, how didst thou come beneath the darkness and the shadow, thou that art a living man? Grievous is the sight of these things to the living, for between us and you are great rivers and dreadful streams; first, Oceanus, which can no wise be crossed on foot, but only if we have a well-wrought ship. Art thou but now come hither with thy ship and thy company in thy long wanderings from Troy? and hast thou not yet reached Ithaca, nor seen thy wife in thy halls?"

Even so she spake, and I answered her, and said: "O my mother, necessity was on me to come down to the house of Hades to seek to the spirit of Theban Teiresias. For not yet have I drawn near to the Achaean shore, nor yet have I set foot on mine own country, but have been wandering evermore in affliction from the day that first I went with goodly Agamemnon to Ilios of the fair steeds, to do battle with the Trojans. But come, declare me this and plainly tell it all. What doom overcame thee of death that lays men at their length? Was it a slow disease, or did Artemis the archer slay thee with the visitation of her gentle shafts?"

And tell me of my father and my son, that I left behind me; doth my honour yet abide with them, or hath another already taken it, while they say that I shall come home no more? And tell me of my wedded wife, of her counsel and her purpose, doth she abide with her son and keep all secure, or hath she already wedded the best of the Achaeans?"

Even so I spake, and anon my lady mother answered me: "Yea, verily, she abideth with steadfast spirit in thy halls; and wearily for her the nights wane always and the days in shedding of tears. But the fair honour that is thine no man hath yet taken; but Telemachus sits at peace on his demesne, and feasts at equal banquets, whereof it is meet that a judge partake, for all men bid him to their house. And thy father abides there in the field, and goes not down to the town, nor lies he on bedding or rugs or shining blankets, but all the winter he sleeps, where sleep the thralls in the house, in the ashes by the fire, and is clad in sorry raiment. But when the summer comes and the rich harvest-tide, his beds of fallen leaves are strewn lowly all about the knoll of his vineyard plot. There he lies sorrowing and nurses his mighty grief, for long desire of thy return, and old age withal comes heavy upon him. Yea and even so did I too perish and meet my doom. It was not the archer goddess of the keen sight, who slew me in my halls with the visitation of her gentle shafts, nor did any sickness come upon me, such as chiefly with a sad wasting draws the spirit from the limbs; nay, it was my sore longing for thee, and for thy counsels, great Odysseus, and for thy loving-kindness, that reft me of sweet life."

So spake she, and I mused in my heart, and would fain have embraced the spirit of my mother dead. Thrice I sprang towards her, and was minded to embrace her; thrice she flitted from my hands as a shadow or even as a dream, and sharp grief arose ever at my heart. And uttering my voice I spake to her winged words: "Mother mine, wherefore dost thou not abide me who am eager to clasp thee, that even in Hades we twain may cast our arms each about the other, and have our fill of chill lament? Is this but a phantom that the high goddess Persephone hath sent me, to the end that I may groan for more exceeding sorrow?"

So spake I, and my lady mother answered me anon: "Ah me, my child, of all men most ill-fated, Persephone, the daughter of

Zeus, doth in no wise deceive thee, but even on this wise it is with mortals when they die. For the sinews no more bind together the flesh and bones, but the great force of burning fire abolishes these, so soon as the life hath left the white bones, and the spirit like a dream flies forth and hovers near. But haste with all thine heart toward the sunlight, and mark all this, that even hereafter thou mayest tell it to thy wife."

Thus we twain held discourse together; and lo, the women came up, for the high goddess Persephone sent them forth, all they that had been the wives and daughters of mighty men.

[Here the names and deeds of many famous women are set forth.]

Now when holy Persephone had scattered this way and that the spirits of the women folk, thereafter came the soul of Agamemnon, son of Atreus, sorrowing; and round him others were gathered, the ghosts of those who had died with him in the house of Aegisthus and met their doom. And he knew me straightway when he had drunk the dark blood, yea, and he wept aloud, and shed big tears as he stretched forth his hands in his longing to meet me. But it might not be, for he had now no steadfast strength nor power at all in moving, such as was aforetime in his supple limbs.

At the sight of him I wept and was moved with compassion, and uttering my voice, spake to him winged words: "Most renowned son of Atreus, Agamemnon, king of men, say what doom overcame thee of death that lays men at their length? Did Poseidon smite thee in thy ships, raising the dolorous blast of contrary winds, or did unfriendly men do thee hurt upon the land, whilst thou wert cutting off their oxen and fair flocks of sheep, or fighting to win a city and the women thereof?"

So spake I, and straightway he answered and said unto me: "Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, it was not Poseidon, that smote me on my ships, and raised the dolorous blast of contrary winds, nor did unfriendly men do me hurt upon the land, but Aegisthus it was that wrought me death and doom and slew me, with the aid of my accursed wife, as one slays an ox at the stall, after he had bidden me to his house, and entertained me at a feast. Even so I died by a death most pitiful, and round me my company likewise

were slain without ceasing, like swine with glittering tusks which are slaughtered in the house of a rich and mighty man, whether at a wedding banquet or a joint-feast or a rich clan-drinking. Ere now hast thou been at the slaying of many a man, killed in single fight or in strong battle, yet thou wouldst have sorrowed the most at this sight, how we lay in the hall round the mixing-bowl and the laden boards, and the floor all ran with blood. And most pitiful of all that I heard was the voice of the daughter of Priam, of Cassandra, whom hard by me the crafty Clytemnestra slew. Then I strove to raise my hands as I was dying upon the sword, but to earth they fell. And that shameless one turned her back upon me, and had not the heart to draw down my eyelids with her fingers nor to close my mouth. So surely is there nought more terrible and shameless than a woman who imagines such evil in her heart, even as she too planned a foul deed, fashioning death for her wedded lord. Verily I had thought to come home most welcome to my children and my thralls; but she, out of the depth of her evil knowledge, hath shed shame on herself and on all womankind, which shall be for ever, even on the upright....”

Thus we twain stood sorrowing, holding sad discourse, while the big tears fell fast: and therewithal came the soul of Achilles, son of Peleus, and of Patroclus and of noble Antilochus and of Aias, who in face and form was goodliest of all the Danaans, after the noble son of Peleus. And the spirit of the son of Aeacus, fleet of foot, knew me again, and making lament spake to me winged words:

“Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, man overbold, what new deed and hardier than this wilt thou devise in thy heart? How durst thou come down to the house of Hades, where dwell the senseless dead, the phantoms of men outworn?”

So he spake, but I answered him: “Achilles, son of Peleus, mightiest far of the Achaeans, I am come hither to seek to Teiresias, if he may tell me any counsel, how I may come to rugged Ithaca. For not yet have I come nigh the Acliaean land, nor set foot on mine own soil, but am still in evil case; while as for thee, Achilles, none other than thou wast heretofore the most blessed of men, nor shall any be hereafter. For of old, in the days of thy life, we Argives gave thee one honour with the gods, and now thou art a great prince here among the dead. Wherefore let not thy death be any grief to thee, Achilles.”

Even so I spake, and he straightway answered me, and said: "Nay, speak not comfortably to me of death, oh great Odysseus. Rather would I live on ground as the hireling of another, with a landless man who had no great livelihood, than bear sway among all the dead that be departed. But come, tell me tidings of that lordly son of mine—did he follow to the war to be a leader or not? And tell me of noble Peleus if thou hast heard aught, is he yet held in worship among the Myrmidons, or do they dishonour him from Hellas to Phthia, for that old age binds him hand and foot? For I am no longer his champion under the sun, so mighty a man as once I was, when in wide Troy I slew the best of the host, and succoured the Argives. Ah! could I but come for an hour to my father's house as then I was, so would I make my might and hands invincible, to be hateful to many an one of those who do him despite and keep him from his honour."

[Achilles then hears of the deeds of his son Neoptolemus, and passes on with great strides along the mead of asphodel, rejoicing in his son's renown. Odysseus sees other of the famous dead.]

There then I saw Minos, glorious son of Zeus, wielding a golden sceptre, giving sentence from his throne to the dead, while they sat and stood around the prince, asking his dooms through the wide-gated house of Hades. And after him I marked the mighty Orion driving the wild beasts together over the mead of asphodel, the very beasts that himself had slain on the lonely hills, with a strong mace all of bronze in his hands, that is ever unbroken. . . . Moreover I beheld Tantalus in grievous torment, standing in a mere and the water came nigh unto his chin. And he stood straining as one athirst, but he might not attain to the water to drink of it. For often as that old man stooped down in his eagerness to drink, so often the water was swallowed up and it vanished away, and the black earth still showed at his feet, for some god parched it evermore. And tall trees flowering shed their fruit overhead, pears and pomegranates and apple trees with bright fruit, and sweet figs and olives in their bloom, whereat when the old man reached down his hands to clutch them, the wind would toss them to the shadowy clouds.

Yea and I beheld Sisyphus in strong torment, grasping a monstrous stone with both his hands. He was pressing thereat

with hands and feet, and trying to roll the stone upward toward the brow of the hill. But oft as he was about to hurl it over the top, the weight would drive him back, so once again to the plain rolled the stone, the shameless thing. And he once more kept heaving and straining, and the sweat the while was pouring down his limbs, and the dust rose upwards from his head.

And after him I descried the mighty Heracles, his phantom, I say; but as for himself he hath joy at the banquet among the deathless gods, and hath to wife Hebe of the fair ankles, child of great Zeus, and of Here of the golden sandals. And all about him there was a clamour of the dead, as it were fowls flying every way in fear, and he like black Night, with bow uncased, and shaft upon the string, fiercely glancing around, like one in the act to shoot. And about his breast was an awful belt, a baldric of gold, whereon wondrous things were wrought, bears and wild boars and lions with flashing eyes, and strife and battles and slaughters and murders of men. Nay, now that he hath fashioned this, never another may he fashion, whoso stored in his craft the device of that belt! And anon he knew me when his eyes beheld me, and making lament he spake unto me winged words:

“Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices: ah! wretched one, dost thou too lead such a life of evil doom, as I endured beneath the rays of the sun? I was the son of Zeus Cronion, yet had I trouble beyond measure, for I was subdued unto a man far worse than I. And he enjoined on me hard adventures, yea and on a time he sent me hither to bring back the hound of hell; for he devised no harder task for me than this. I lifted the hound and brought him forth from out of the house of Hades; and Hermes sped me on my way and the grey-eyed Athene.”

Therewith he departed again into the house of Hades, but I abode there still, if perchance some one of the hero folk besides might come, who died in old time. Yea and I should have seen the men of old, whom I was fain to look on, Theseus and Peirithous, renowned children of the gods. But ere that might be the myriad tribes of the dead thronged up together with wondrous clamour: and pale fear gat hold of me, lest the high goddess Persephone should send me the head of the Gorgon, that dread monster, from out of Hades.

Straightway then I went to the ship, and bade my men mount the vessel, and loose the hawsers. So speedily they went on board and sat upon the benches. And the wave of the flood bore the barque down the stream of Oceanus, we rowing first, and afterwards the fair wind was our convoy.

WORDSWORTH

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770-1850) was born at Cockermouth and educated at Hawkeshead school and Cambridge. He describes his boyhood days and his life at Cambridge in some fine passages of his autobiographical poem *The Prelude*. A volume entitled *Lyrical Ballads* (1798, enlarged to two volumes in 1800) aroused much opposition owing to the simple language of the poems and the lowly character of the subjects—the kind of poetry then in fashion being very artificial and ornamented. Wordsworth's best short poems and sonnets, full of noble thought and quiet beauty, are among the finest in our tongue. His longest poem is called *The Excursion*. The sonnets that follow, all breathing forth the loftiest patriotism, belong to the years of the Napoleonic war. The ancient republic of Venice was extinguished by the victorious Napoleon in 1797. Switzerland was formed by France into the Helvetian republic in 1798. The 1802 sonnets belong to the period of the Peace of Amiens when Wordsworth for a moment thought that England was faltering in its moral duty.

ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC

Once did She hold the gorgeous east in fee;
 And was the safeguard of the west: the worth
 Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
 Venice, the eldest Child of Liberty.
 She was a maiden City, bright and free;
 No guile seduced, no force could violate;
 And, when she took unto herself a Mate,
 She must espouse the everlasting Sea.
 And what if she had seen those glories fade,
 Those titles vanish, and that strength decay;
 Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
 When her long life hath reached its final day:
 Men are we, and must grieve when even the Shade
 Of that which once was great is passed away.



THE MARRIAGE OF THE ADRIATIC

Turner

THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE SUBJUGATION OF
SWITZERLAND

Two Voices are there; one is of the sea,
One of the mountains; each a mighty Voice:
In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,
They were thy chosen music, Liberty!
There came a Tyrant, and with holy glee
Thou fought'st against him; but hast vainly striven:
Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven,
Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.
Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft:
Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left;
For, high-souled Maid, what sorrow would it be
That Mountain floods should thunder as before,
And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
And neither awful Voice be heard by thee!

WRITTEN IN LONDON, SEPTEMBER, 1802

O Friend! I know not which way I must look
For comfort, being, as I am, opprest,
To think that now our life is only drest
For show; mean handy-work of craftsman, cook,
Or groom!—We must run glittering like a brook
In the open sunshine, or we are unblest:
The wealthiest man among us is the best:
No grandeur now in nature or in book
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
This is idolatry; and these we adore:
Plain living and high thinking are no more:
The homely beauty of the good old cause
Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,
And pure religion breathing household laws.

LONDON, 1802

Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour:
England hath need of thee: she is a fen
Of stagnant waters; altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,

Have forfeited their ancient English dower
 Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
 Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
 And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
 Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart;
 Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:
 Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
 So didst thou travel on life's common way,
 In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
 The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

[Published 1807]

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
 Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
 Little we see in nature that is ours;
 We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
 This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
 The winds that will be howling at all hours,
 And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
 For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
 It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather be
 A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
 So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
 Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
 Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
 Or hear old Triton blow his wreathéd horn.

[1802]

It is not to be thought of that the Flood
 Of British freedom, which, to the open sea
 Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity
 Hath flowed, "with pomp of waters, unwithstood,"
 Roused though it be full often to a mood
 Which spurns the check of salutary bands,
 That this most famous Stream in bogs and sands
 Should perish; and to evil and to good
 Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung
 Armoury of the invincible Knights of old:

We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
That Shakespeare spake; the faith and morals hold
Which Milton held.—In everything we are sprung
Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

[1802-3]

When I have borne in memory what has tamed
Great Nations, how ennobling thoughts depart
When men change swords for ledgers, and desert
The student's bower for gold, some fears unnamed
I had, my Country—am I to be blamed?
Now, when I think of thee, and what thou art,
Verily, in the bottom of my heart,
Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.
But dearly must we prize thee; we who find
In thee a bulwark for the cause of men;
And I by my affection was beguiled:
What wonder if a Poet now and then,
Among the many movements of his mind,
Felt for thee as a lover or a child!

MILTON

ENGLAND'S STRENGTH AND YOUTH

Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks: methinks I see her as an eagle muing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam; purging and unscaling her long-abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance; while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means, and in their envious gabble would prognosticate a year of sects and schisms.

THACKERAY

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY (1811-63) was born in Calcutta and educated at the Charterhouse and Cambridge. He was called to the bar, but his inclination was for literature and he soon became a contributor to many papers and magazines. The early struggles of Pendennis and Warrington represent something of Thackeray's own life at this period. He had artistic

talent, and drew sketches to illustrate his writings. His fame was not fully established till the appearance of his first great novel, *Vanity Fair*, in 1847. Other novels by him are *Pendennis*, *The Newcomes* and *The Adventures of Philip*. One of his finest works is the historical tale, *Esmond*, with a sequel, *The Virginians*. Thackeray's various lectures and essays are an important part of his work.

The selection that follows is taken from *Vanity Fair*, the action of which passes in the Napoleonic period. The chief characters concerned are Miss Rebecca Sharp, an artful, designing girl of poor birth, who wishes to get on in the world. She "sets her cap" at everyone likely to be of use to her and at last succeeds in marrying Rawdon Crawley, a captain in the Dragoons, a man of fashion and good breeding, but a gambler and spendthrift, heavily in debt. Amelia Sedley is a girl of an entirely softer nature, married to George Osborne, a handsome, good-hearted, but weak and vain young officer. He yields to the fascinations of Mrs Rawdon Crawley, neglects his own wife and loses heavily at cards with Rawdon Crawley. Amelia has an excellent friend, Captain William Dobbin, a good, brave fellow, who has long silently loved her. Major O'Dowd, a bluff, hearty Irishman, adored by his big-hearted, plain-spoken wife, is in the same regiment. Another important character is Joseph Sedley, Amelia's middle aged brother, a retired Indian official ("collector at Bogleywollah"). He is selfish, vain and cowardly. Isidor is his Belgian servant. Pauline is Amelia's Belgian servant, whose sweetheart is Regulus, a Belgian soldier of small courage.

WATERLOO

I

There never was, since the days of Darius, such a brilliant train of camp-followers as hung round the Duke of Wellington's army in the Low Countries, in 1815; and led it dancing and feasting, as it were, up to the very brink of battle. A certain ball which a noble Duchess gave at Brussels on the 15th of June in the above-named year is historical. All Brussels had been in a state of excitement about it, and I have heard from ladies who were in that town at the period, that the talk and interest of persons of their own sex regarding the ball was much greater even than in respect of the enemy in their front. The struggles, intrigues, and prayers to get tickets were such as only English ladies will employ, in order to gain admission to the society of the great of their own nation.

Jos and Mrs O'Dowd, who were panting to be asked, strove in vain to procure tickets; but others of our friends were more lucky. For instance, through the interest of my Lord Bareacres, and as a set-off for the dinner at the restaurateur's, George got a card

for Captain and Mrs Osborne; which circumstance greatly elated him. Dobbin, who was a friend of the General commanding the division in which their regiment was, came laughing one day to Mrs Osborne, and displayed a similar invitation, which made Jos envious, and George wonder how the deuce *he* should be getting into society. Mr and Mrs Rawdon, finally, were of course invited; as became the friends of a General commanding a cavalry brigade.

On the appointed night, George, having commanded new dresses and ornaments of all sorts for Amelia, drove to the famous ball, where his wife did not know a single soul. After looking about for Lady Bareacres, who cut him, thinking the card was quite enough—and after placing Amelia on a bench, he left her to her own cogitations there, thinking, on his own part, that he had behaved very handsomely in getting her new clothes, and bringing her to the ball, where she was free to amuse herself as she liked. Her thoughts were not of the pleasantest, and nobody except honest Dobbin came to disturb them....

George, who had left Emmy on her bench on entering the ballroom, very soon found his way back when Rebecca was by her dear friend's side. Becky was just lecturing Mrs Osborne upon the follies which her husband was committing. "For God's sake, stop him from gambling, my dear," she said, "or he will ruin himself. He and Rawdon are playing at cards every night, and you know he is very poor, and Rawdon will win every shilling from him if he does not take care. Why don't you prevent him, you little careless creature? Why don't you come to us of an evening, instead of moping at home with that Captain Dobbin? I daresay he is *très aimable*; but how could one love a man with feet of such size? Your husband's feet are darlings—Here he comes.—Where have you been, wretch? Here is Emmy crying her eyes out for you. Are you coming to fetch me for the quadrille?" And she left her bouquet and shawl by Amelia's side, and tripped off with George to dance. Women only know how to wound so. There is a poison on the tips of their little shafts, which stings a thousand times more than a man's blunter weapon. Our poor Emmy, who had never hated, never sneered all her life, was powerless in the hands of her remorseless little enemy.

George danced with Rebecca twice or thrice—how many times Amelia scarcely knew. She sate quite unnoticed in her corner,

except when Rawdon came up with some words of clumsy conversation: and later in the evening, when Captain Dobbin made so bold as to bring her refreshments and sit beside her. He did not like to ask her why she was so sad; but as a pretext for the tears which were filling in her eyes, she told him that Mrs Crawley had alarmed her by telling her that George would go on playing.

"It is curious, when a man is bent upon play, by what clumsy rogues he will allow himself to be cheated," Dobbin said; and Emmy said, "Indeed." She was thinking of something else. It was not the loss of the money that grieved her.

At last George came back for Rebecca's shawl and flowers. She was going away. She did not even condescend to come back and say good-bye to Amelia. The poor girl let her husband come and go without saying a word, and her head fell on her breast. Dobbin had been called away, and was whispering deep in conversation with the General of the division, his friend, and had not seen this last parting. George went away then with the bouquet; but when he gave it to the owner, there lay a note, coiled like a snake among the flowers. Rebecca's eye caught it at once; she had been used to deal with notes in early life. She put out her hand and took the nosegay. He saw by her eyes as they met, that she was aware what she should find there. Her husband hurried her away, still too intent upon his own thoughts, seemingly, to take note of any marks of recognition which might pass between his friend and his wife. These were, however, but trifling. Rebecca gave George her hand with one of her usual quick knowing glances, and made a curtsy and walked away. George bowed over the hand, said nothing in reply to a remark of Crawley's, did not hear it even, his brain was so throbbing with triumph and excitement, and allowed them to go away without a word.

His wife saw the one part at least of the bouquet-scene. It was quite natural that George should come at Rebecca's request to get her her scarf and flowers: it was no more than he had done twenty times before in the course of the last few days; but now it was too much for her. "William," she said, suddenly clinging to Dobbin, who was near her, "you've always been very kind to me—I'm—I'm not well. Take me home." She did not know she called him by his Christian name, as George was accustomed to do. He went away with her quickly. Her lodgings were hard by; and

they threaded through the crowd without, where everything seemed to be more astir than even in the ballroom within. George had been angry twice or thrice at finding his wife up on his return from the parties which he frequented: so she went straight to bed now; but although she did not sleep, and although the din and clatter, and the galloping of horsemen were incessant, she never heard any of these noises, having quite other disturbances to keep her awake.

Osborne meanwhile, wild with elation, went off to a play-table, and began to bet frantically. He won repeatedly. "Everything succeeds with me to-night," he said. But his luck at play even did not cure him of his restlessness, and he started up after a while, pocketing his winnings, and went to a buffet, where he drank off many bumpers of wine.

Here, as he was rattling away to the people around, laughing loudly and wild with spirits, Dobbin found him. He had been to the card-tables to look there for his friend. Dobbin looked as pale and grave as his comrade was flushed and jovial.

"Hallo, Dob! Come and drink, old Dob! The Duke's wine is famous. Give me some more, you sir;" and he held out a trembling glass for the liquor.

"Come out, George," said Dobbin, still gravely; "don't drink."

"Drink! there's nothing like it. Drink yourself, and light up your lantern jaws, old boy. Here's to you."

Dobbin went up and whispered something to him, at which George, giving a start and a wild hurra, tossed off his glass, clapped it on the table, and walked away speedily on his friend's arm. "The enemy has passed the Sambre," William said, "and our left is already engaged. Come away. We are to march in three hours."

Away went George, his nerves quivering with excitement at the news so long looked for, so sudden when it came. What were love and intrigue now? He thought about a thousand things but these in his rapid walk to his quarters—his past life and future chances—the fate which might be before him—the wife, the child perhaps, from whom unseen he might be about to part. Oh, how he wished that night's work undone! and that with a clear conscience at least he might say farewell to the tender and guileless being by whose love he had set such little store!

He thought over his brief married life. In those few weeks he had frightfully dissipated his little capital. How wild and reckless he had been! Should any mischance befall him: what was then left for her? How unworthy he was of her. Why had he married her? He was not fit for marriage. Why had he disobeyed his father, who had been always so generous to him? Hope, remorse, ambition, tenderness, and selfish regret filled his heart. He sate down and wrote to his father, remembering what he had said once before when he was engaged to fight a duel. Dawn faintly streaked the sky as he closed this farewell letter. He sealed it, and kissed the superscription. He thought how he had deserted that generous father, and of the thousand kindnesses which the stern old man had done him.

He had looked into Amelia's bedroom when he entered; she lay quiet, and her eyes seemed closed, and he was glad that she was asleep. On arriving at his quarters from the ball, he had found his regimental servant already making preparations for his departure: the man had understood his signal to be still, and these arrangements were very quickly and silently made. Should he go in and wake Amelia, he thought, or leave a note for her brother to break the news of departure to her? He went in to look at her once again.

She had been awake when he first entered her room, but had kept her eyes closed, so that even her wakefulness should not seem to reproach him. But when he had returned, so soon after herself, too, this timid little heart had felt more at ease, and turning towards him as he stepped softly out of the room, she had fallen into a light sleep. George came in and looked at her again, entering still more softly. By the pale night-lamp he could see her sweet, pale face—the purple eyelids were fringed and closed, and one round arm, smooth and white, lay outside of the coverlet. Good God! how pure she was; how gentle, how tender, and how friendless! and he, how selfish, brutal, and black with crime! Heart-stained, and shame-stricken, he stood at the bed's foot, and looked at the sleeping girl. How dared he—who was he, to pray for one so spotless! God bless her! God bless her! He came to the bedside, and looked at the hand, the little soft hand, lying asleep; and he bent over the pillow noiselessly towards the gentle, pale face.

Two fair arms closed tenderly round his neck as he stooped down. "I am awake, George," the poor child said, with a sob fit to break the little heart that nestled so closely by his own. She was awake, poor soul, and to what? At that moment a bugle from the Place of Arms began sounding clearly, and was taken up through the town; and amidst the drums of the infantry and the shrill pipes of the Scotch, the whole city awoke.

II

We do not claim to rank among the military novelists. Our place is with the non-combatants. When the decks are cleared for action we go below and wait meekly. We should only be in the way of the manœuvres that the gallant fellows are performing overhead. We shall go no further with the —th than to the city gate: and leaving Major O'Dowd to his duty, come back to the Major's wife, and the ladies, and the baggage.

Now the Major and his lady, who had not been invited to the ball at which in our last chapter other of our friends figured, had much more time to take their wholesome natural rest in bed, than was accorded to people who wished to enjoy pleasure as well as to do duty. "It's my belief, Peggy, my dear," said he, as he placidly pulled his nightcap over his ears, "that there will be such a ball danced in a day or two as some of 'em has never heard the chune of"; and he was much more happy to retire to rest after partaking of a quiet tumbler, than to figure at any other sort of amusement. Peggy, for her part, would have liked to have shown her turban and bird of paradise at the ball, but for the information which her husband had given her, and which made her very grave.

"I'd like ye wake me about half an hour before the assembly beats," the Major said to his lady. "Call me at half-past one, Peggy dear, and see me things is ready. Maybe I'll not come back to breakfast, Mrs O'D." With which words, which signified his opinion that the regiment would march the next morning, the Major ceased talking, and fell asleep.

Mrs O'Dowd, the good housewife, arrayed in curl-papers and a camisole, felt that her duty was to act, and not to sleep, at this juncture. "Time enough for that," she said, "when Mick's gone;" and so she packed his travelling valise ready for the march, brushed his cloak, his cap, and other warlike habiliments, set

them out in order for him; and stowed away in the cloak-pockets a light package of portable refreshments, and a wicker-covered flask or pocket-pistol, containing near a pint of a remarkably sound Cognac brandy, of which she and the Major approved very much; and as soon as the hands of the "repayther" pointed to half-past one, and its interior arrangements (it had a tone quite aqual to a cathaydral, its fair owner considered) knelled forth that fatal hour, Mrs O'Dowd woke up her Major, and had as comfortable a cup of coffee prepared for him as any made that morning in Brussels. And who is there will deny that this worthy lady's preparations betokened affection as much as the fits of tears and hysterics by which more sensitive females exhibited their love, and that their partaking of this coffee, which they drank together while the bugles were sounding the turn-out and the drums beating in the various quarters of the town, was not more useful and to the purpose than the outpouring of any mere sentiment could be? The consequence was, that the Major appeared on parade quite trim, fresh, and alert, his well-shaved rosy countenance, as he sate on horseback, giving cheerfulness and confidence to the whole corps. All the officers saluted her when the regiment marched by the balcony on which this brave woman stood and waved them a cheer as they passed; and I daresay it was not from want of courage, but from a sense of female delicacy and propriety, that she refrained from leading the gallant —th personally into action.

On Sundays, and at periods of a solemn nature, Mrs O'Dowd used to read with great gravity out of a large volume of her uncle the Dean's sermons. It had been of great comfort to her on board the transport as they were coming home, and were very nearly wrecked, on their return from the West Indies. After the regiment's departure she betook herself to this volume for meditation; perhaps she did not understand much of what she was reading, and her thoughts were elsewhere: but the sleep project, with poor Mick's nightcap there on the pillow, was quite a vain one. So it is in the world. Jack or Donald marches away to glory with his knapsack on his shoulder, stepping out briskly to the tune of "The Girl I left behind me." It is she who remains and suffers,—and has the leisure to think, and brood, and remember...

[Rawdon Crawley bids his wife farewell before going out to join his regiment, and instructs her how to dispose of their possessions if he should never return. He has some horses which he tells her to sell to the best advantage.]

And there was another of our acquaintances who was also to be left behind, a non-combatant, and whose emotions and behaviour we have therefore a right to know. This was our friend the ex-Collector of Boggleywollah, whose rest was broken, like other people's, by the sounding of the bugles in the early morning. Being a great sleeper, and fond of his bed, it is possible he would have snoozed on until his usual hour of rising in the forenoon, in spite of all the drums, bugles, and bagpipes in the British army, but for an interruption, which did not come from George Osborne, who shared Jos's quarters with him, and was as usual occupied too much with his own affairs, or with grief at parting with his wife, to think of taking leave of his slumbering brother-in-law—it was not George, we say, who interposed between Jos Sedley and sleep, but Captain Dobbin, who came and roused him up, insisting on shaking hands with him before his departure.

"Very kind of you," said Jos, yawning, and wishing the Captain at the deuce.

"I—I didn't like to go off without saying good-bye, you know," Dobbin said in a very incoherent manner; "because you know some of us mayn't come back again, and I like to see you all well, and—and that sort of thing, you know."

"What do you mean?" Jos asked, rubbing his eyes. The Captain did not in the least hear him or look at the stout gentleman in the nightcap, about whom he professed to have such a tender interest. The hypocrite was looking and listening with all his might in the direction of George's apartments, striding about the room, upsetting the chairs, beating the tattoo, biting his nails, and showing other signs of great inward emotion.

Jos had always had rather a mean opinion of the Captain, and now began to think his courage was somewhat equivocal. "What is it I can do for you, Dobbin?" he said in a sarcastic tone.

"I tell you what you can do," the Captain replied, coming up to the bed: "we march in a quarter of an hour, Sedley, and neither George nor I may ever come back. Mind you, you are not to stir from this town until you ascertain how things go. You are to stay here and watch over your sister, and comfort her, and see

that no harm comes to her. If anything happens to George, remember she has no one but you in the world to look to. If it goes wrong with the army, you'll see her safe back to England; and you will promise me on your word that you will never desert her. I know you won't: as far as money goes, you were always free enough with that. Do you want any? I mean, have you enough gold to take you back to England in case of a misfortune?"

"Sir," said Jos majestically, "when I want money, I know where to ask for it. And as for my sister, *you* needn't tell me how I ought to behave to her."

"You speak like a man of spirit, Jos," the other answered good-naturedly, "and I am glad that George can leave her in such good hands. So I may give him your word of honour, may I, that in case of extremity you will stand by her?"

"Of course, of course," answered Mr Jos, whose generosity in money matters Dobbin estimated quite correctly.

"And you'll see her safe out of Brussels in the event of a defeat?"

"A defeat! D—— it, sir, it's impossible. Don't try and frighten *me*," the hero cried from his bed; and Dobbin's mind was thus perfectly set at ease, now that Jos had spoken out so resolutely respecting his conduct to his sister. "At least," thought the Captain, "there will be a retreat secured for her in case the worst should ensue."

If Captain Dobbin expected to get any personal comfort and satisfaction from having one more view of Amelia before the regiment marched away, his selfishness was punished just as such odious egotism deserved to be. The door of Jos's bedroom opened into the sitting-room which was common to the family party, and opposite this door was that of Amelia's chamber. The bugles had wakened everybody: there was no use in concealment now. George's servant was packing in this room: Osborne coming in and out of the contiguous bedroom, flinging to the man such articles as he thought fit to carry on the campaign. And presently Dobbin had the opportunity which his heart coveted, and he got sight of Amelia's face once more. But what a face it was! So white, so wild and despair-stricken, that the remembrance of it haunted him afterwards like a crime, and the sight smote him with inexpressible pangs of longing and pity.

She was wrapped in a white morning dress, her hair falling on

her shoulders, and her large eyes fixed and without light. By way of helping on the preparations for the departure, and showing that she too could be useful at a moment so critical, this poor soul had taken up a sash of George's from the drawers whereon it lay, and followed him to and fro with the sash in her hand, looking on mutely as his packing proceeded.* She came out and stood, leaning at the wall, holding this sash against her bosom, from which the heavy net of crimson dropped like a large stain of blood. Our gentle-hearted Captain felt a guilty shock as he looked at her. "Good God," thought he, "and is it grief like this I dared to pry into?" And there was no help: no means to soothe and comfort this helpless, speechless misery. He stood for a moment and looked at her, powerless and torn with pity, as a parent regards an infant in pain.

At last, George took Emmy's hand, and led her back into the bedroom, from whence he came out alone. The parting had taken place in that moment, and he was gone.

"Thank Heaven that is over," George thought, bounding down the stair, his sword under his arm, as he ran swiftly to the alarm ground, where the regiment was mustered, and whither trooped men and officers hurrying from their billets; his pulse was throbbing and his cheeks flushed: the great game of war was going to be played, and he one of the players. What a fierce excitement of doubt, hope, and pleasure! What tremendous hazards of loss or gain! What were all the games of chance he had ever played compared to this one? Into all contests requiring athletic skill and courage, the young man, from his boyhood upwards, had flung himself with all his might. The champion of his school and his regiment, the bravos of his companions had followed him everywhere; from the boys' cricket-match to the garrison-races, he had won a hundred of triumphs; and wherever he went, women and men had admired and envied him. What qualities are there for which a man gets so speedy a return of applause, as those of bodily superiority, activity, and valour? Time out of mind strength and courage have been the theme of bards and romances; and from the story of Troy down to to-day, poetry has always chosen a soldier for a hero. I wonder is it because men are cowards in heart that they admire bravery so much, and place military valour so far beyond every other quality for reward and worship?

So, at the sound of that stirring call to battle, George jumped away from the gentle arms in which he had been dallying; not without a feeling of shame (although his wife's hold on him had been but feeble), that he should have been detained there so long. The same feeling of eagerness and excitement was amongst all those friends of his of whom we have had occasional glimpses, from the stout senior Major, who led the regiment into action, to little Stubble, the Ensign, who was to bear its colours on that day.

The sun was just rising as the march began—it was a gallant sight—the band led the column, playing the regimental march—then came the Major in command, riding upon Pyramus, his stout charger—then marched the grenadiers, their Captain at their head; in the centre were the colours, borne by the senior and junior Ensigns—then George came marching at the head of his company. He looked up, and smiled at Amelia, and passed on; and even the sound of the music died away....

III

Several times during the forenoon Mr Jos's Isidor went from his lodgings into the town, and to the gates of the hotels and lodging-houses round about the Parc, where the English were congregated, and there mingled with other valets, couriers, and lackeys, gathered such news as was abroad, and brought back bulletins for his master's information. Almost all these gentlemen were in heart partisans of the Emperor, and had their opinions about the speedy end of the campaign. The Emperor's proclamation from Avesnes had been distributed everywhere plentifully in Brussels. "Soldiers!" it said, "this is the anniversary of Marengo and Friedland, by which the destinies of Europe were twice decided. Then, as after Austerlitz, as after Wagram, we were too generous. We believed in the oaths and promises of princes whom we suffered to remain upon their thrones. Let us march once more to meet them. We and they, are we not still the same men? Soldiers! these same Prussians, who are so arrogant to-day, were three to one against you at Jena, and six to one at Montmirail. Those among you who were prisoners in England can tell their comrades what frightful torments they suffered on board the English hulks. Madmen! a moment of prosperity has blinded them, and if they enter into France it will be to find a grave



HOUGOUMONT

Turner



THE FIELD OF WATERLOO

Turner

there!" But the partisans of the French prophesied a more speedy extermination of the Emperor's enemies than this; and it was agreed on all hands that Prussians and British would never return except as prisoners in the rear of the conquering army.

These opinions in the course of the day were brought to operate upon Mr Sedley. He was told that the Duke of Wellington had gone to try to rally his army, the advance of which had been utterly crushed the night before.

"Crushed, psha!" said Jos, whose heart was pretty stout at breakfast-time. "The Duke has gone to beat the Emperor, as he has beaten all his generals before."

"His papers are burned, his effects are removed, and his quarters are being got ready for the Duke of Dalmatia," Jos's informant replied. "I had it from his own *maître d'hôtel*. Milor Duc de Richemont's people are packing up everything. His Grace has fled already, and the Duchess is only waiting to see the plate packed to join the King of France at Ostend."

"The King of France is at Ghent, fellow," replied Jos, affecting incredulity.

"He fled last night to Bruges, and embarks to-day from Ostend. The Duc de Berri is taken prisoner. Those who wish to be safe had better go soon, for the dykes will be opened to-morrow, and who can fly when the whole country is under water?"

"Nonsense, sir; we are three to one, sir, against any force Boney can bring into the field," Mr Sedley objected; "the Austrians and the Russians are on their march. He must, he shall be crushed," Jos said, slapping his hand on the table.

"The Prussians were three to one at Jena, and he took their army and kingdom in a week. They were six to one at Montmirail, and he scattered them like sheep. The Austrian army *is* coming, but with the Empress and the King of Rome at its head; and the Russians, bah! the Russians will withdraw. No quarter is to be given to the English, on account of their cruelty to our braves on board the infamous pontoons. Look here, here it is in black and white. Here's the proclamation of his Majesty the Emperor and King," said the now declared partisan of Napoleon, and taking the document from his pocket, Isidor sternly thrust it into his master's face, and already looked upon the frogged coat and valuables as his own spoil.

Jos was, if not seriously alarmed as yet, at least considerably disturbed in mind. "Give me my coat and cap, sir," said he, "and follow me. I will go myself and learn the truth of these reports." Isidor was furious as Jos put on the braided frock. "Milor had better not wear that military coat," said he; "the Frenchmen have sworn not to give quarter to a single British soldier."

"Silence, sirrah!" said Jos, with a resolute countenance still, and thrust his arm into the sleeve with indomitable resolution....

At half-past two, an event occurred of daily importance to Mr Joseph: the dinner-hour arrived. Warriors may fight and perish, but he must dine. He came into Amelia's room to see if he could coax her to share that meal. "Try," said he; "the soup is very good. Do try, Emmy," and he kissed her hand. Except when she was married, he had not done so much for years before. "You are very good and kind, Joseph," she said. "Everybody is, but, if you please, I will stay in my room to-day."

The savour of the soup, however, was agreeable to Mrs O'Dowd's nostrils: and she thought she would bear Mr Jos company. So the two sate down to their meal. "God bless the meat," said the Major's wife solemnly: she was thinking of her honest Mick, riding at the head of the regiment: "'Tis but a bad dinner those poor boys will get to-day," she said, with a sigh, and then, like a philosopher, fell to.

Jos's spirits rose with his meal. He would drink the regiment's health; or, indeed, take any other excuse to indulge in a glass of champagne. "We'll drink to O'Dowd and the brave —th," said he, bowing gallantly to his guest. "Hey, Mrs O'Dowd? Fill Mrs O'Dowd's glass, Isidor."

But all of a sudden Isidor started, and the Major's wife laid down her knife and fork. The windows of the room were open and looked southward, and a dull distant sound came over the sun-lighted roofs from that direction. "What is it?" said Jos. "Why don't you pour, you rascal?"

"*C'est le feu!*" said Isidor, running to the balcony.

"God defend us; it's cannon!" Mrs O'Dowd cried, starting up, and followed too to the window. A thousand pale and anxious faces might have been seen looking from other casements. And presently it seemed as if the whole population of the city rushed into the streets.

IV

We of peaceful London City have never beheld—and please God never shall witness—such a scene of hurry and alarm as that which Brussels presented. Crowds rushed to the Namur gate, from which direction the noise proceeded, and many rode along the level *chaussée*, to be in advance of any intelligence from the army. Each man asked his neighbour for news; and even great English lords and ladies condescended to speak to persons whom they did not know. The friends of the French went abroad, wild with excitement, and prophesying the triumph of their Emperor. The merchants closed their shops, and came out to swell the general chorus of alarm and clamour. Women rushed to the churches, and crowded the chapels, and knelt and prayed on the flags and steps. The dull sound of the cannon went on rolling, rolling. Presently carriages with travellers began to leave the town, galloping away by the Ghent barrier. The prophecies of the French partisans began to pass for facts. “He has cut the armies in two,” it was said. “He is marching straight on Brussels. He will overpower the English, and be here to-night.” “He will overpower the English,” shrieked Isidor to his master, “and will be here to-night.” The man bounded in and out from the lodgings to the street, always returning with some fresh particulars of disaster. Jos’s face grew paler and paler. Alarm began to take entire possession of the stout civilian. All the champagne he drank brought no courage to him. Before sunset he was worked up to such a pitch of nervousness as gratified his friend Isidor to behold, who now counted surely upon the spoils of the owner of the laced coat...

At some ten o’clock the clinking of a sabre might have been heard up the stair of the house where the Osbornes occupied a story in the Continental fashion. A knock might have been heard at the kitchen door; and poor Pauline, come back from church, fainted almost with terror as she opened it and saw before her her haggard hussar. He looked as pale as the midnight dragoon who came to disturb Leonora. Pauline would have screamed, but that her cry would have called her masters, and discovered her friend. She stifled her scream, then, and leading her hero into the kitchen, gave him beer, and the choice bits from the dinner, which Jos had

not had the heart to taste. The hussar showed he was no ghost by the prodigious quantity of flesh and beer which he devoured—and during the mouthfuls he told his tale of disaster.

His regiment had performed prodigies of courage, and had withstood for a while the onset of the whole French army. But they were overwhelmed at last, as was the whole British army by this time. Ney destroyed each regiment as it came up. The Belgians in vain interposed to prevent the butchery of the English. The Brunswickers were routed and had fled—their Duke was killed. It was a general *débâcle*. He sought to drown his sorrow for the defeat in floods of beer.

Isidor, who had come into the kitchen, heard the conversation, and rushed out to inform his master. “It is all over,” he shrieked to Jos. “Milor Duke is a prisoner; the Duke of Brunswick is killed; the British army is in full flight; there is only one man escaped, and he is in the kitchen now—come and hear him.” So Jos tottered into that apartment, where Regulus still sate on the kitchen table, and clung fast to his flagon of beer. In the best French which he could muster, and which was in sooth of a very ungrammatical sort, Jos besought the hussar to tell his tale. The disasters deepened as Regulus spoke. He was the only man of his regiment not slain on the field. He had seen the Duke of Brunswick fall, the black hussars fly, the Ecossais pounded down by the cannon.

“And the —th?” gasped Jos.

“Cut in pieces,” said the hussar—upon which Pauline cried out, “O my mistress, *ma bonne petite dame*,” went off fairly into hysterics, and filled the house with her screams.

Wild with terror, Mr Sedley knew not how or where to seek for safety. He rushed from the kitchen back to the sitting room, and cast an appealing look at Amelia’s door, which Mrs O’Dowd had closed and locked in his face; but he remembered how scornfully the latter had received him, and after pausing and listening for a brief space at the door, he left it, and resolved to go into the street, for the first time that day. So, seizing a candle, he looked about for his gold-laced cap, and found it lying in its usual place, on a console-table, in the anteroom, placed before a mirror at which Jos used to coquet, always giving his side-locks a twirl,

and his cap the proper cock over his eye, before he went forth to make appearance in public. Such is the force of habit, that even in the midst of his terror he began mechanically to twiddle with his hair, and arrange the cock of his hat. Then he looked amazed at the pale face in the glass before him, and especially at his mustachios, which had attained a rich growth in the course of near seven weeks, since they had come into the world. They *will* mistake me for a military man, thought he, remembering Isidor's warning as to the massacre with which all the defeated British army was threatened; and staggering back to his bed-chamber, he began wildly pulling the bell which summoned his valet.

Isidor answered that summons. Jos had sunk in a chair—he had torn off his neckcloths, and turned down his collars, and was sitting with both his hands lifted to his throat.

"*Coupez-moi*, Isidor," shouted he; "*vite ! Coupez-moi !*"

Isidor thought for a moment he had gone mad, and that he wished his valet to cut his throat.

"*Les moustaches*," gasped Jos; "*les moustaches—coupy, rasy, vite !*"—his French was of this sort—voluble, as we have said, but not remarkable for grammar.

Isidor swept off the mustachios in no time with the razor, and heard with inexpressible delight his master's orders that he should fetch a hat and a plain coat. "*Ne porty ploo—habit militaire—bonny—donny a voo, prennny dehors*"—were Jos's words: the coat and cap were at last his property.

This gift being made, Jos selected a plain black coat and waistcoat from his stock, and put on a large white neckcloth and a plain beaver. If he could have got a shovel-hat he would have worn it. As it was, you would have fancied he was a flourishing, large parson of the Church of England.

"*Venny maintenong*," he continued, "*sweevy—ally—party—dong la roo*." And so having said, he plunged swiftly down the stairs of the house, and passed into the street...

[Rebecca sells her horses to the frightened Jos Sedley at an enormous profit.]

By the time Jos's bargain with Rebecca was completed, and his horses had been visited and examined, it was almost morning once more. But though midnight was long passed, there was no rest for the city; the people were up, the lights in the houses flamed,

crowds were still about the doors, and the streets were busy. Rumours of various natures went still from mouth to mouth: one report averred that the Prussians had been utterly defeated; another that it was the English who had been attacked and conquered: a third that the latter had held their ground. This last rumour gradually got strength. No Frenchmen had made their appearance. Stragglers had come in from the army bringing reports more and more favourable: at last an aide-de-camp actually reached Brussels with dispatches for the Commandant of the place, who placarded presently through the town an official announcement of the success of the allies at Quatre Bras, and the entire repulse of the French under Ney after a six hours' battle. The aide-de-camp must have arrived some time while Jos and Rebecca were making their bargain together, or the latter was inspecting his purchase. When he reached his own hotel, he found a score of its numerous inhabitants on the threshold discoursing of the news; there was no doubt as to its truth. And he went up to communicate it to the ladies under his charge. He did not think it was necessary to tell them how he had intended to take leave of them, how he had bought horses, and what a price he had paid for them.

But success or defeat was a minor matter to them, who had only thought for the safety of those they loved. Amelia, at the news of the victory, became still more agitated even than before. She was for going that moment to the army. She besought her brother with tears to conduct her thither. Her doubts and terrors reached their paroxysm; and the poor girl, who for many hours had been plunged into stupor, raved and ran hither and thither in hysteric insanity—a piteous sight. No man writhing in pain on the hard-fought field fifteen miles off, where lay, after their struggles, so many of the brave—no man suffered more keenly than this poor harmless victim of the war. Jos could not bear the sight of her pain. He left his sister in the charge of her stouter female companion, and descended once more to the threshold of the hotel, where everybody still lingered, and talked, and waited for more news.

It grew to be broad daylight as they stood here, and fresh news began to arrive from the war, brought by men who had been actors in the scene. Wagons and long country carts laden with wounded

came rolling into the town; ghastly groans came from within them, and haggard faces looked up sadly from out of the straw. Jos Sedley was looking at one of these carriages with a painful curiosity—the moans of the people within were frightful—the wearied horses could hardly pull the cart. “Stop! Stop!” a feeble voice cried from the straw, and the carriage stopped opposite Mr Sedley’s hotel.

“It is George! I know it is!” cried Amelia, rushing in a moment to the balcony, with a pallid face and loose flowing hair. It was not George, however, but it was the next best thing—it was news of him. It was poor Tom Stubble, who had marched out of Brussels so gallantly twenty-four hours before, bearing the colours of the regiment, which he had defended very gallantly upon the field. A French lancer had speared the young ensign in the leg, who fell, still bravely holding to his flag. At the conclusion of the engagement, a place had been found for the poor boy in a cart, and he had been brought back to Brussels.

“Mr Sedley, Mr Sedley!” cried the boy faintly, and Jos came up almost frightened at the appeal. He had not at first distinguished who it was that called him.

Little Tom Stubble held out his hot and feeble hand. “I’m to be taken in here,” he said. “Osborne—and—and Dobbin said I was; and you are to give the man two napoleons: my mother will pay you.” This young fellow’s thoughts during the long feverish hours passed in the cart, had been wandering to his father’s parsonage which he had quitted only a few months before, and he had sometimes forgotten his pain in that delirium.

The hotel was large, and the people kind, and all the inmates of the cart were taken in and placed on various couches. The young ensign was conveyed upstairs to Osborne’s quarters. Amelia and the Major’s wife had rushed down to him, when the latter had recognized him from the balcony. You may fancy the feelings of these women when they were told that the day was over, and both their husbands were safe; in what mute rapture Amelia fell on her good friend’s neck, and embraced her; in what a grateful passion of prayer she fell on her knees, and thanked the Power which had saved her husband.

Our young lady, in her fevered and nervous condition, could have had no more salutary medicine prescribed for her by any

physician than that which chance put in her way. She and Mrs O'Dowd watched incessantly by the wounded lad, whose pains were very severe, and in the duty thus forced upon her, Amelia had not time to brood over her personal anxieties, or to give herself up to her own fears and forebodings after her wont. The young patient told in his simple fashion the events of the day, and the actions of our friends of the gallant —th. They had suffered severely. They had lost very many officers and men. The Major's horse had been shot under him as the regiment charged, and they all thought that O'Dowd was gone, and that Dobbin had got his majority, until on their return from the charge to their old ground, the Major was discovered seated on Pyramus's carcase, refreshing himself from a case-bottle. It was Captain Osborne that cut down the French lancer who had speared the ensign. Amelia turned so pale at the notion, that Mrs O'Dowd stopped the young ensign in his story. And it was Captain Dobbin who at the end of the day, though wounded himself, took up the lad in his arms and carried him to the surgeon, and thence to the cart which was to bring him back to Brussels. And it was he who promised the driver two louis if he would make his way to Mr Sedley's hotel in the city; and tell Mrs Captain Osborne that the action was over, and that her husband was unhurt and well.

"Indeed, but he has a good heart that William Dobbin," Mrs O'Dowd said, "though he is always laughing at me."

Young Stubble vowed there was not such another officer in the army, and never ceased his praises of the senior captain, his modesty, his kindness, and his admirable coolness in the field. To these parts of the conversation, Amelia lent a very distracted attention; it was only when George was spoken of that she listened, and when he was not mentioned she thought about him.

In tending her patient, and in thinking of the wonderful escapes of the day before, her second day passed away not too slowly with Amelia. There was only one man in the army for her: and as long as he was well, it must be owned that its movements interested her little. All the reports which Jos brought from the streets fell very vaguely on her ears; though they were sufficient to give that timorous gentleman, and many other people then in Brussels, every disquiet. The French had been repulsed certainly, but it was after a severe and doubtful struggle, and with only a division

of the French army. The Emperor, with the main body, was away at Ligny, where he had utterly annihilated the Prussians, and was now free to bring his whole force to bear upon the allies. The Duke of Wellington was retreating upon the capital, and a great battle must be fought under its walls probably, of which the chances were more than doubtful. The Duke of Wellington had but twenty thousand British troops on whom he could rely, for the Germans were raw militia, the Belgians disaffected; and with this handful his Grace had to resist a hundred and fifty thousand men that had broken into Belgium under Napoleon. Under Napoleon! What warrior was there, however famous and skilful, that could fight at odds with him?

Jos thought of all these things, and trembled. So did all the rest of Brussels—where people felt that the fight of the day before was but the prelude to the greater combat which was imminent. One of the armies opposed to the Emperor was scattered to the winds already. The few English that could be brought to resist him would perish at their posts, and the conqueror would pass over their bodies into the city. Woe be to those whom he found there! Addresses were prepared, public functionaries assembled and debated secretly, apartments were got ready, and tricoloured banners and triumphal emblems manufactured, to welcome the arrival of His Majesty the Emperor and King....

The next day was a Sunday. And Mrs Major O'Dowd had the satisfaction of seeing both her patients refreshed in health and spirits by some rest which they had taken during the night. She herself had slept in a great chair in Amelia's room, ready to wait upon her poor friend or the ensign, should either need her nursing. When morning came, this robust woman went back to the house where she and her Major had their billet; and here performed an elaborate and splendid toilette befitting the day. And it is very possible that whilst alone in that chamber, which her husband had inhabited, and where his cap still lay on the pillow, and his cane stood in the corner, one prayer at least was sent up to Heaven for the welfare of the brave soldier, Michael O'Dowd.

When she returned she brought her prayer-book with her, and her uncle the Dean's famous book of sermons, out of which she never failed to read every Sabbath; not understanding all, haply, not pronouncing many of the words aright, which were long and

abstruse—for the Dean was a learned man, and loved long Latin words—but with great gravity, vast emphasis, and with tolerable correctness in the main. How often has my Mick listened to these sermons, she thought, and me reading in the cabin of a calm! She proposed to resume this exercise on the present day, with Amelia and the wounded ensign for a congregation. The same service was read on that day in twenty thousand churches at the same hour; and millions of British men and women, on their knees, implored protection of the Father of all.

They did not hear the noise which disturbed our little congregation at Brussels. Much louder than that which had interrupted them two days previously, as Mrs O'Dowd was reading the service in her best voice, the cannon of Waterloo began to roar.

When Jos heard that dreadful sound, he made up his mind that he would bear this perpetual recurrence of terrors no longer, and would fly at once. He rushed into the sick man's room, where our three friends had paused in their prayers, and further interrupted them by a passionate appeal to Amelia.

"I can't stand it any more, Emmy," he said; "I won't stand it; and you must come with me. I have bought a horse for you—never mind at what price—and you must dress and come with me, and ride behind Isidor."

"God forgive me, Mr Sedley! but you are no better than a coward," Mrs O'Dowd said, laying down the book.

"I say come, Amelia," the civilian went on; "never mind what she says; why are we to stop here and be butchered by the Frenchmen?"

"You forget the —th, my boy," said the little Stubble, the wounded hero, from his bed—"and—and you won't leave me, will you, Mrs O'Dowd?"

"No, my dear fellow," said she, going up and kissing the boy. "No harm shall come to you while I stand by. I don't budge till I get the word from Mick. A pretty figure I'd be, wouldn't I, stuck behind that chap on a pillion?"

This image caused the young patient to burst out laughing in his bed, and even made Amelia smile. "I don't ask her," Jos shouted out—"I don't ask that—that Irishwoman, but you, Amelia; once for all, will you come?"

"Without my husband, Joseph?" Amelia said, with a look of wonder, and gave her hand to the Major's wife. Jos's patience was exhausted.

"Good-bye, then," he said, shaking his fist in a rage, and slamming the door by which he retreated. And this time he really gave his order for march, and mounted in the courtyard. Mrs O'Dowd heard the clattering hoofs of the horses as they issued from the gate; and looking on, made many scornful remarks on poor Joseph as he rode down the street with Isidor after him in the laced cap. The horses, which had not been exercised for some days, were lively, and sprang about the street. Jos, a clumsy and timid horseman, did not look to advantage in the saddle. "Look at him, Amelia dear, driving into the parlour window. Such a bull in a china-shop *I* never saw." And presently the pair of riders disappeared at a canter down the street leading in the direction of the Ghent road, Mrs O'Dowd pursuing them with a fire of sarcasm so long as they were in sight.

All that day from morning until past sunset, the cannon never ceased to roar. It was dark when the cannonading stopped all of a sudden.

All of us have read of what occurred during that interval. The tale is in every Englishman's mouth; and you and I, who were children when the great battle was won and lost, are never tired of hearing and recounting the history of that famous action. Its remembrance rankles still in the bosoms of millions of the countrymen of those brave men who lost the day. They pant for an opportunity of revenging that humiliation; and if a contest, ending in a victory on their part, should ensue, elating them in their turn, and leaving its cursed legacy of hatred and rage behind to us, there is no end to the so-called glory and shame, and to the alternations of successful and unsuccessful murder, in which two high-spirited nations might engage. Centuries hence, we Frenchmen and Englishmen might be boasting and killing each other still, carrying out bravely the Devil's code of honour.

All our friends took their share and fought like men in the great field. All day long, whilst the women were praying ten miles away, the lines of the dauntless English infantry were receiving and repelling the furious charges of the French horsemen. Guns which were heard at Brussels were ploughing up their ranks, and

comrades falling, and the resolute survivors closing in. Towards evening, the attack of the French, repeated and resisted so bravely, slackened in its fury. They had other foes besides the British to engage, or were preparing for a final onset. It came at last: the columns of the Imperial Guard marched up the hill of Saint Jean, at length and at once to sweep the English from the height which they had maintained all day, and spite of all: unscared by the thunder of the artillery, which hurled death from the English line, the dark rolling column pressed on and up the hill. It seemed almost to crest the eminence, when it began to wave and falter. Then it stopped, still facing the shot. Then at last the English troops rushed from the post from which no enemy had been able to dislodge them, and the Guard turned and fled.

No more firing was heard at Brussels—the pursuit rolled miles away. Darkness came down on the field and city; and Amelia was praying for George, who was lying on his face, dead, with a bullet through his heart.

AESCHYLUS

AESCHYLUS, who lived five centuries before Christ, was a Greek dramatist. Of all that he wrote only seven plays remain—*The Persians*, *The Suppliants*, *Seven Against Thebes*, *Prometheus Bound*, and *Agamemnon*, *The Mourners* and *The Furies*, the last three forming one group on the same subject. All these plays have been translated by Mr E. D. A. Morshead, formerly a master at Winchester. The passage that follows is the conclusion of *Prometheus Bound*.

PROMETHEUS BOUND

Argument.

In the beginning, Ouranos and Gaia held sway over Heaven and Earth. And manifold children were born unto them, of whom were Cronos, and Okeanos, and the Titans, and the Giants. But Cronos cast down his father Ouranos, and ruled in his stead, until Zeus his son cast him down in his turn, and became King of Gods and men. Then were the Titans divided, for some had good will unto Cronos, and others unto Zeus; until Prometheus, son of the Titan Iapetos, by wise counsel, gave the victory to Zeus. But Zeus held

the race of mortal men in scorn, and was fain to destroy them from the face of the earth; yet Prometheus loved them, and gave secretly to them the gift of fire, and arts whereby they could prosper upon the earth. Then was Zeus sorely angered with Prometheus, and bound him upon a mountain, and afterward overwhelmed him in an earthquake, and devised other torments against him for many ages; yet could he not slay Prometheus, for he was a God.

PROMETHEUS

And yet shall Zeus, for all his stubborn pride,
Be brought to low estate! aha, he schemes
Such wedlock as shall bring his doom on him,
Flung from his kingship to oblivion's lap!
Ay, then the curse his father Cronos spake
As he fell helpless from his agelong throne,
Shall be fulfilled unto the utterance!
No god but I can manifest to him
A rescue from such ruin as impends—
I know it, I, and how it may be foiled.
Go to, then, let him sit and blindly trust
His skyey rumblings, for security,
And wave his levin with its blast of flame!
All will avail him not, nor bar his fall
Down to dishonour vile, intolerable—
So strong a wrestler is he moulding now
To his own proper downfall—yea, a shape
Portentous and unconquerably huge,
Who truly shall reveal a flame more strong
Than is the lightning, and a crash of sound
More loud than thunder, and shall dash to nought
Poseidon's trident-spear, the ocean-bane
That makes the firm earth quiver. Let Zeus strike
Once on this rock, he speedily shall learn
How far the fall from power to slavery!

CHORUS (of Sea-nymphs, daughters of Oceanus)
Beware! thy wish doth challenge Zeus himself.

PROMETHEUS

I voice my wish and its fulfilment too.

CHORUS

What, dare we look for one to conquer Zeus?

PROMETHEUS

Ay—Zeus shall wear more painful bonds than mine.

CHORUS

Darest thou speak such taunts and tremble not?

PROMETHEUS

Why should I fear, who am immortal too?

CHORUS

Yet he might doom thee to worse agony.

PROMETHEUS

Out on his dooming! I foreknow it all.

CHORUS

Yet do the wise revere Necessity.

PROMETHEUS

Ay, ay—do reverence, cringe and crouch to power
Whene'er, where'er thou see it! But, for me,
I reckon of Zeus as something less than nought.
Let him put forth his power, attest his sway,
Howe'er he will—a momentary show,
A little brief authority in heaven!
Aha, I see out yonder one who comes,
A bidden courier, truckling at Zeus' nod,
A lacquey in his new lord's livery,
Surely on some fantastic errand sped!

[Enter HERMES.

HERMES

Thou, double-dyed in gall of bitterness,
Trickster and sinner against gods, by giving



PROMETHEUS TORTURED BY THE EAGLE

From a decorated cup in the Vatican

The stolen fire to perishable men!
Attend—the Sire supreme doth bid thee tell
What is the wedlock which thou vauntest now,
Whereby he falleth from supremacy?
Speak forth the whole, make all thine utterance clear,
Have done with words inscrutable, nor cause
To me, Prometheus! any further toil
Or twofold journeying. Go to—thou seest
Zeus doth not soften at such words as thine!

PROMETHEUS

Pompous, in sooth, thy word, and swoln with pride,
As doth befit the lacquey of thy lords!
O ye young gods! how, in your youthful sway,
Ye deem secure your citadels of sky,
Beyond the reach of sorrow or of fall!
Have I not seen two dynasties of gods
Already flung therefrom? and soon shall see
A third, that now in tyranny exults,
Shamed, ruined, in an hour! What sayest thou?
Crouch I and tremble at these stripling powers?
Small homage unto such from me, or none!
Betake thee hence, sweat back along thy road—
Look for no answer from me, get thee gone!

HERMES

Think—it was such audacities of will
That drove thee erst to anchorage in woe!

PROMETHEUS

Ay—but mark this: mine heritage of pain
I would not barter for thy servitude.

HERMES

Better, forsooth, be bond-slave to a crag,
Than true-born herald unto Zeus the Sire!

PROMETHEUS

Take thine own coin—taunts for a taunting slave!

HERMES

Proud art thou in thy circumstance, methinks!

PROMETHEUS

Proud? in such pride then be my foemen set,
And I to see—and of such foes art thou!

HERMES

What, blam'st thou me too for thy sufferings?

PROMETHEUS

Mark a plain word—I loathe all gods that are,
Who reaped my kindness and repay with wrong.

HERMES

I hear no little madness in thy words.

PROMETHEUS

Madness be mine, if scorn of foes be mad.

HERMES

Past bearing were thy pride, in happiness.

PROMETHEUS

Ah me!

HERMES

Zeus knoweth nought of sorrow's cry!

PROMETHEUS

He shall! Time's lapse bringeth all lessons home.

HERMES

To thee it brings not yet discretion's curb.

PROMETHEUS

No—else I had not wrangled with a slave!

HERMES

Then thou concealest all that Zeus would learn?

PROMETHEUS

As though I owed him aught and should repay!

HERMES

Scornful thy word, as though I were a child—

PROMETHEUS

Child, ay—or whatsoe'er hath less of brain—
 Thou, deeming thou canst wring my secret out!
 No mangling torture, no, nor sleight of power
 There is, by which he shall compel my speech,
 Until these shaming bonds be loosed from me.
 So, let him fling his blazing levin-bolt!
 Let him with white and wingéd flakes of snow,
 And rumbling earthquakes, whelm and shake the world!
 For nought of this shall bend me to reveal
 The power ordained to hurl him from his throne.

HERMES

Bethink thee if such words can mend thy lot.

PROMETHEUS

All have I long foreseen, and all resolved.

HERMES

Perverse of will! constrain, constrain thy soul
 To think more wisely in the grasp of doom!

PROMETHEUS

Truce to vain words! as wisely wouldst thou strive
 To warn a swelling wave: imagine not
 That ever I before thy lord's resolve
 Will shrink in womanish terror, and entreat,
 As with soft supplicance of female hands,
 The Power I scorn unto the utterance,
 To loose me from the chains that bind me here—
 A world's division 'twixt that thought and me!

HERMES

So, I shall speak, whate'er I speak, in vain!
No prayer can melt or soften thy resolve;
But, as a colt new-harnessed champs the bit,
Thou strivest and art restive to the rein.
But all too feeble is the stratagem
In which thou art so confident: for know
That strong self-will is weak and less than nought
In one more proud than wise. Bethink thee now—
If these my words thou shouldest disregard—
What storm, what might as of a great third wave
Shall dash thy doom upon thee, past escape!
First shall the Sire, with thunder and the flame
Of lightning, rend the crags of this ravine,
And in the shattered mass o'erwhelm thy form,
Immured and morticed in a claspng rock.
Thence, after age on age of durance done,
Back to the daylight shalt thou come, and there
The eagle-hound of Zeus, red-ravening, fell
With greed, shall tatter piecemeal all thy flesh
To shreds and ragged vestiges of form—
Yea, an unbidden guest, a day-long bane,
That feeds, and feeds—yea, he shall gorge his fill
On blackened fragments, from thy vitals gnawed.
Look for no respite from that agony
Until some other deity be found,
Ready to bear for thee the brunt of doom,
Choosing to pass into the lampless world
Of Hades and the murky depths of hell.
Hereat, advise thee! 'tis no feignéd threat
Whereof I warn thee, but an o'er-true tale.
The lips of Zeus know nought of lying speech,
But wreak in action all their words foretell.
Therefore do thou look warily, and deem
Prudence a better saviour than self-will.

CHORUS

Meseems that Hermes speaketh not amiss,
Bidding thee leave thy wilfulness and seek

The wary walking of a counselled mind.
Give heed! to err through anger shames the wise.

PROMETHEUS

All, all I knew, whate'er his tongue
In idle arrogance hath flung.
'Tis the world's way, the common lot—
Foe tortures foe and pities not.
Therefore I challenge him to dash
His bolt on me, his zigzag flash
Of piercing, rending flame!
Now be the welkin stirred amain
With thunder-peal and hurricane,
And let the wild winds now displace
From its firm poise and rooted base
The stubborn earthly frame!
The raging sea with stormy surge
Rise up and ravin and submerge
Each high star-trodden way!
Me let him lift and dash to gloom
Of nether hell, in whirls of doom!
Yet—do he what extremes he may—
He cannot crush my life away!

HERMES

Such are the counsels, such the strain,
Heard from wild lips and frenzied brain!
In word or thought, how fails his fate
Of madness wild and desperate?
(*To the CHORUS*)
But ye, who stand compassionate
Here at his side, depart in haste!
Lest of his penalty ye taste,
And shattered brain and reason feel
The roaring, ruthless thunder-peal!

CHORUS

Out on thee! if thy heart be fain
I should obey thee, change thy strain!

Drives down in might its destined road
 The tempest of the wrath of God!
 O holy Earth, O mother mine!
 O Sky, that biddest speed along
 Thy vault the common Light divine,—
 Be witness of my wrong!

[*The rocks are rent with fire and earthquake, and fall,
 burying PROMETHEUS in the ruins.*]

SHELLEY

A POETIC drama on the release of Prometheus was written by the English poet Shelley. The secret known to Prometheus (referred to in the preceding extract) is this: that if Zeus (or Jupiter) weds Thetis, a son shall be born to him, fated to release Prometheus and to become more famous than Zeus himself. Zeus tortures Prometheus in vain. The secret is unrevealed.

The goddesses Asia and Panthea, who love the tortured Titan and pity his sufferings, descend to the cave of Demogorgon—the supreme power of the Universe—to ask when the woes of Prometheus will end.

PROMETHEUS UNBOUND

ASIA. One more demand; and do thou answer me
 As mine own soul would answer, did it know
 That which I ask. Prometheus shall arise
 Henceforth the sun of this rejoicing world:
 When shall the destined hour arrive?

DEMOGORGON.

Behold!

ASIA. The rocks are cloven, and through the purple night
 I see cars drawn by rainbow-wingéd steeds
 Which trample the dim winds: in each there stands
 A wild-eyed charioteer urging their flight.
 Some look behind, as fiends pursued them there,
 And yet I see no shapes but the keen stars:
 Others, with burning eyes, lean forth, and drink
 With eager lips the wind of their own speed,
 As if the thing they loved fled on before,
 And now, even now, they clasped it. Their bright locks
 Stream like a comet's flashing hair: they all
 Sweep onward.

DEMOGORGON. These are the immortal Hours,
Of whom thou didst demand. One waits for thee.

ASIA. A spirit with a dreadful countenance
Checks its dark chariot by the craggy gulf.
Unlike thy brethren, ghastly charioteer,
Who art thou? Whither wouldst thou bear me? Speak!

SPIRIT. I am the shadow of a destiny
More dread than is my aspect: ere yon planet
Has set, the darkness which ascends with me
Shall wrap in lasting night heaven's kingless throne.

ASIA. What meanest thou?

PANTHEA. That terrible shadow floats
Up from its throne, as may the lurid smoke
Of earthquake-ruined cities o'er the sea.
Lo! it ascends the car; the coursers fly
Terrified: watch its path among the stars
Blackening the night!

ASIA. Thus I am answered: strange!

PANTHEA. See, near the verge, another chariot stays;
An ivory shell inlaid with crimson fire,
Which comes and goes within its sculptured rim
Of delicate strange tracery; the young spirit
That guides it has the dove-like eyes of hope;
How its soft smiles attract the soul! as light
Lures wingéd insects through the lampless air.

SPIRIT. My coursers are fed with the lightning,
They drink of the whirlwind's stream,
And when the red morning is bright'ning
They bathe in the fresh sunbeam;
They have strength for their swiftness I deem,
Then ascend with me, daughter of Ocean.

I desire: and their speed makes night kindle;
I fear: they outstrip the Typhoon;
Ere the cloud piled on Atlas can dwindle
We encircle the earth and the moon:
We shall rest from long labours at noon:
Then ascend with me, daughter of Ocean.

*The Car pauses within a Cloud on the top of a snowy Mountain.
Asia, Panthea and the Spirit of the Hour.*

SPIRIT. On the brink of the night and the morning
My coursers are wont to respire;
But the Earth has just whispered a warning
That their flight must be swifter than fire:
They shall drink the hot speed of desire!

ASIA. Thou breathest on their nostrils, but my breath
Would give them swifter speed.

SPIRIT. Alas! it could not.

PANTHEA. Oh Spirit! pause, and tell whence is the light
Which fills this cloud? the sun is yet unrisen.

SPIRIT. The sun will rise not until noon. Apollo
Is held in heaven by wonder; and the light
Which fills this vapour, as the æreal hue
Of fountain-gazing roses fills the water,
Flows from thy mighty sister.

PANTHEA. Yes, I feel—

ASIA. What is it with thee, sister? Thou art pale.

PANTHEA. How thou art changed! I dare not look on thee;
I feel but see thee not. I scarce endure
The radiance of thy beauty. Some good change
Is working in the elements, which suffer
Thy presence thus unveiled.

[The goddesses are borne onward, conscious that some mighty change is about to befall. The marriage of Jupiter and Thetis takes place. Demogorgon appears and casts Jupiter forth from heaven. Asia and Panthea are borne onwards to the Caucasus where Prometheus is unbound by Hercules. Prometheus sends forth the Spirit of the Hour to sound the signal of man's deliverance from Jupiter. The Spirit returns, and describes the new world of man released from the bondage of evil and knowing no law save love.]

SPIRIT OF THE HOUR.

Soon as the sound had ceased whose thunder filled
The abysses of the sky and the wide earth,
There was a change: the impalpable thin air
And the all-circling sunlight were transformed,
As if the sense of love dissolved in them
Had folded itself round the spheréd world.
My vision then grew clear, and I could see

Into the mysteries of the universe:
Dizzy as with delight I floated down,
Winnowing the lightsome air with languid plumes,
My coursers sought their birthplace in the sun,
Where they henceforth will live exempt from toil,
Pasturing flowers of vegetable fire;...
As I have said, I floated to the earth:
It was, as it is still, the pain of bliss
To move, to breathe, to be; I wandering went
Among the haunts and dwellings of mankind,
And first was disappointed not to see
Such mighty change as I had felt within
Expressed in outward things; but soon I looked,
And behold, thrones were kingless, and men walked
One with the other even as spirits do,
None fawned, none trampled; hate, disdain, or fear,
Self-love or self-contempt, on human brows
No more inscribed, as o'er the gate of hell,
"All hope abandon ye who enter here";
None frowned, none trembled, none with eager fear
Gazed on another's eye of cold command,
Until the subject of a tyrant's will
Became, worse fate, the abject of his own,
Which spurred him, like an outspent horse, to death.
None wrought his lips in truth-entangling lines
Which smiled the lie his tongue disdained to speak;
None, with firm sneer, trod out in his own heart
The sparks of love and hope till there remained
Those bitter ashes, a soul self-consumed,
And the wretch crept a vampire among men,
Infecting all with his own hideous ill;...
The painted veil, by those who were, called life
Which mimicked, as with colours idly spread,
All men believed or hoped, is torn aside;
The loathsome mask has fallen, the man remains
Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, but man
Equal, unclassed, tribeless and nationless,
Exempt from awe, worship, degree, the king
Over himself; just, gentle, wise: but man

Passionless?—no, yet free from guilt and pain,
 Which were, for his will made or suffered them,
 Nor yet exempt, though ruling them like slaves,
 From chance, and death, and mutability,
 The clogs of that which else might oversoar
 The loftiest star of unascended heaven,
 Pinnacled dim in the intense inane.

[At the end of the drama the voice of Demogorgon is heard calling the powers of the Universe to note that the day of man's deliverance has come.]

To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;
 To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;
 To defy Power, which seems omnipotent;
 To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates
 From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;
 Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;
 This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be
 Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;
 This is alone Life, Joy, Empire and Victory.

EURIPIDES

EURIPIDES, who flourished between four and five centuries before Christ, was a Greek dramatist, author of many plays, of which about eighteen remain, including *Hippolytus*, *Alcestis*, *Medea*, *Andromache*, *Electra*, *The Trojan Women* and *The Followers of Bacchus*. These have been translated by Professor Gilbert Murray, whose version is used here. The passage that follows is taken from *Hippolytus*. Theseus, king of Athens, is a hero of the Greeks, descended from Poseidon or Neptune, god of the sea. Hippolytus, the son of Theseus, is accused of plotting a terrible crime against his father. Theseus in wrath calls on Poseidon to destroy Hippolytus. The god obeys, and, all too late, Theseus discovers that his son is guiltless.

THE DEATH OF HIPPOLYTUS

HENCHMAN

O King, I bear thee tidings of dire weight
 To thee, aye, and to every man, I ween,
 From Athens to the marches of Trozên.

THESEUS

What? Some new stroke hath touched, unknown to me,
 The sister cities of my sovranity?

HENCHMAN

Hippolytus is. . . Nay, not dead; but stark
Outstretched, a hairsbreadth this side of the dark.

THESEUS (*as though unmoved*)

How slain?

HENCHMAN

His own wild team destroyed him, and the dire
Curse of thy lips.

The boon of thy great Sire
Is granted thee, O King, and thy son slain.

THESEUS

Ye Gods! And thou, Poseidon! Not in vain
I called thee Father; thou hast heard my prayer!
How did he die? Speak on.

HENCHMAN

'Twas by the bank of beating sea we stood,
We thralls, and decked the steeds, and combed each mane;
Weeping; for word had come that ne'er again
The foot of our Hippolytus should roam
This land, but waste in exile by thy doom.

So stood we till he came, and in his tone
No music now save sorrow's, like our own,
And in his train a concourse without end
Of many a chase-fellow and many a friend.
At last he brushed his sobs away, and spake:
"Why this fond loitering? I would not break
My Father's law.—Ho, there! My coursers four
And chariot, quick! This land is mine no more."

Thereat, be sure, each man of us made speed.
Swifter than speech we brought them up, each steed
Well dight and shining, at our Prince's side.
He grasped the reins upon the rail: one stride
And there he stood, a perfect charioteer,
Each foot in its own station set. Then clear
His voice rose, and his arms to heaven were spread:
"O Zeus, if I be false, strike thou me dead!

But, dead or living, let my Father see
One day, how falsely he hath hated me!"

Even as he spake, he lifted up the goad
And smote; and the steeds sprang. And down the road
We henchmen followed, hard beside the rein,
Each hand, to speed him, toward the Argive plain
And Epidaurus.

So we made our way
Up toward the desert region, where the bay
Curls to a promontory near the verge
Of our Trozên, facing the southward surge
Of Saron's gulf. Just there an angry sound,
Slow-swelling, like God's thunder underground,
Broke on us, and we trembled. And the steeds
Pricked their ears skyward, and threw back their heads.
And wonder came on all men, and affright,
Whence rose that awful voice. And swift our sight
Turned seaward, down the salt and roaring sand.

And there, above the horizon, seemed to stand
A wave unearthly, crested in the sky;
Till Skiron's Cape first vanished from mine eye,
Then sank the Isthmus hidden, then the rock
Of Epidaurus. Then it broke, one shock
And roar of gasping sea and spray flung far,
And shoreward swept, where stood the Prince's car.

Three lines of wave together raced, and, full
In the white crest of them, a wild Sea-Bull
Flung to the shore, a fell and marvellous Thing.
The whole land held his voice, and answering
Roared in each echo. And all we, gazing there,
Gazed seeing not; 'twas more than eyes could bear.

Then straight upon the team wild terror fell.
Howbeit, the Prince, cool-eyed and knowing well
Each changing mood a horse has, gripped the reins
Hard in both hands; then as an oarsman strains
Up from his bench, so strained he on the thong,
Back in the chariot swinging. But the young
Wild steeds bit hard the curb, and fled afar;
Nor rein nor guiding hand nor morticed car

Stayed them at all. For when he veered them round,
 And aimed their flying feet to grassy ground,
 In front uprose that Thing, and turned again
 The four great coursers, terror-mad. But when
 Their blind rage drove them toward the rocky places,
 Silent, and ever nearer to the traces,
 It followed, rockward, till one wheel-edge grazed.

The chariot tript and flew, and all was mazed
 In turmoil. Up went wheel-box with a din,
 Where the rock jagged, and nave and axle-pin.
 And there—the long reins round him—there was he
 Dragging, entangled irretrievably.
 A dear head battering at the chariot side,
 Sharp rocks, and ripped flesh, and a voice that cried:
 “Stay, stay, O ye who fattened at my stalls,
 Dash me not into nothing!—O thou false
 Curse of my Father!—Help! Help, whoso can,
 An innocent, innocent and stainless man!”

Many there were that laboured then, I wot,
 To bear him succour, but could reach him not,
 Till—who knows how?—at last the tangled rein
 Unclasped him, and he fell, some little vein
 Of life still pulsing in him.

All beside,
 The steeds, the hornéd Horror of the Tide,
 Had vanished—who knows where?—in that wild land.

O King, I am a bondsman of thine hand;
 Yet love nor fear nor duty me shall win
 To say thine innocent son hath died in sin.
 All women born may hang themselves, for me,
 And swing their dying words from every tree
 On Ida! For I know that he was true!

ROBERT BROWNING

ROBERT BROWNING (1812-89) was born in Camberwell and educated mainly at a private school and at home; he studied Greek at University College, London. His first important poem, *Pauline*, was written at the age of nineteen. Many of his short poems are dramatic utterances, attributed to historical or imaginary characters. The best of these are grouped under the

titles *Men and Women* and *Dramatic Lyrics*. His longer poems usually deal with the state of mind and the spiritual struggles of various characters, so many of his poems are difficult to understand. But everybody can understand and like *The Pied Piper*, *How they brought the good news from Ghent to Aix*, *Hervé Riel* and *Home Thoughts*. Browning was specially fond of Italy and lived there for some time. He died in Venice on the day his last volume was published.

Browning planned a poem in continuation of the story of Hippolytus as told by Euripides. Artemis (or Diana), the goddess whom Hippolytus had served devoutly, carries away his mangled body to her forest grove and delivers it to Asclepius (or Aesculapius), the divine healer, to restore to life. The poem was not finished. The part that exists, called *Artemis Prologizes*, represents the goddess as relating the unhappy story of Hippolytus and his encounter with the sea-monster. The passage that follows is the latter half of the poem.

THE HEALING OF HIPPOLYTUS

Now Theseus from Poseidon had obtained
That of his wishes should be granted three,
And one he imprecated straight—"Alive
May ne'er Hippolotos reach other lands!"
Poseidon heard, ai ai! And scarce the prince
Had stepped into the fixed boots of the car
That give the feet a stay against the strength
Of the Henetian horses, and around
His body flung the rein, and urged their speed
Along the rocks and shingles of the shore,
When from the gaping wave a monster flung
His obscene body in the coursers' path.
These, mad with terror, as the sea-bull sprawled
Wallowing about their feet, lost care of him
That reared them; and the master-chariot-pole
Snapping beneath their plunges like a reed,
Hippolotos, whose feet were trammelled fast,
Was yet dragged forward by the circling rein
Which either hand directed; nor they quenched
The frenzy of their flight before each trace,
Wheel-spoke and splinter of the woeful car,
Each boulder-stone, sharp stub and spiny shell,
Huge fish-bone wrecked and wreathed amid the sands
On that detested beach, was bright with blood
And morsels of his flesh: then fell the steeds

Head-foremost, crashing in their mooned fronts,
Shivering with sweat, each white eye horror-fixed.
His people, who had witnessed all afar,
Bore back the ruins of Hippolotos.
But when his sire, too swoln with pride, rejoiced,
(Indomitable as a man foredoomed)
That vast Poseidon had fulfilled his prayer,
I, in a flood of glory visible,
Stood o'er my dying votary, and, deed
By deed, revealed, as all took place, the truth.
Then Theseus lay the woefullest of men,
And worthily; but ere the death-veils hid
His face, the murdered prince full pardon breathed
To his rash sire. Whereat Athenai wails.
So I, who ne'er forsake my votaries,
Lest in the cross-way none the honey-cake
Should tender, nor pour out the dog's hot life;
Lest at my fane the priests disconsolate
Should dress my image with some faded poor
Few crowns, made favours of, nor dare object
Such slackness to my worshippers who turn
Elsewhere the trusting heart and loaded hand,
As they had climbed Olumpos to report
Of Artemis and nowhere found her throne—
I interposed: and, this eventful night,—
(While round the funeral pyre the populace
Stood with fierce light on their black robes which bound
Each sobbing head, while yet their hair they clipped
O'er the dead body of their withered prince,
And, in his palace, Theseus prostrated
On the cold hearth, his brow cold as the slab
'Twas bruised on, groaned away the heavy grief—
As the pyre fell, and down the cross logs crashed,
Sending a crowd of sparkles through the night,
And the gay fire, elate with mastery,
Towered like a serpent o'er the clotted jars
Of wine, dissolving oils and frankincense,
And splendid gums like gold),—my potency
Conveyed the perished man to my retreat

In the thrice-venerable forest here.
And this white-bearded sage who squeezes now
The berried plant, is Phoibos' son of fame,
Asclepios, whom my radiant brother taught
The doctrine of each herb and flower and root,
To know their secret'st virtue and express
The saving soul of all: who so has soothed
With lavers the torn brow and murdered cheeks,
Composed the hair and brought its gloss again,
And called the red bloom to the pale skin back,
And laid the strips and jagged ends of flesh
Even once more, and slacked the sinew's knot
Of every tortured limb—that now he lies
As if mere sleep possessed him underneath
These interwoven oaks and pines. Oh cheer,
Divine presenter of the healing rod,
Thy snake, with ardent throat and lulling eye,
Twines his lithe spires around! I say, much cheer!
Proceed thou with thy wisest pharmacies!
And ye, white crowd of woodland sister-nymphs,
Ply, as the sage directs, these buds and leaves
That strew the turf around the twain! While I
Await, in fitting silence, the event.

ARISTOPHANES

ARISTOPHANES, who lived about four centuries before Christ, was a Greek dramatist. Aeschylus and Euripides wrote tragedies; Aristophanes wrote comedies, of which ten survive, including *The Knights*, *The Birds*, *The Frogs*, *The Clouds* and *The Wasps*. The scene which follows is taken from *The Frogs*, a play that makes game of Aeschylus and Euripides. These two great dramatists are represented as quarrelling together, each claiming to be the greater poet. The god Dionysus (or Bacchus) acts as referee in their dispute. Euripides accuses Aeschylus of writing stuff so high-flown and mysterious that no one can make sense of it. Aeschylus retorts by saying that the tragedies of Euripides are so poor and ordinary that one can introduce a commonplace phrase about a flask of oil anywhere into his verses without making any difference to the sense or style. The Greeks (like the southern Europeans of to-day) made great use of olive oil. They used it with their food just as we use butter, and they anointed their bodies with it after

bathing. So a Greek on a journey took his oil flask with him just as an Englishman takes his umbrella—and forgot it just as frequently.

In the following scene each poet quotes some specimen of his verse, and the other tries to find fault with it. The translation is that of Professor Gilbert Murray.

SCENE FROM *THE FROGS*

DIONYSUS

Well, say the next; and (*to EURIPIDES*) you look out for slips.

AESCHYLUS

“Be thou my light and saviour where I pray
In this my fatherland returned, restored.”

EURIPIDES

Our noble Aeschylus repeats himself.

DIONYSUS

How so?

EURIPIDES

Observe his phrasing, and you’ll see.
First to this land “returned” and then “restored”;
“Returned” is just the same thing as “restored.”

DIONYSUS

Why, yes! It’s just as if you asked your neighbour,
“Lend me a pail, or, if not that, a bucket.”

AESCHYLUS

Oh, too much talking has bemuzzed your brain!
The words are not the same; the line is perfect.

DIONYSUS

Now, is it really? Tell me how you mean.

AESCHYLUS

Returning home is the act of any person
Who has a home; he comes back, nothing more;
An exile both returns and is restored!

DIONYSUS

True, by Apollo! (*To EURIPIDES*) What do you say to that?

EURIPIDES

I don't admit Orestes was restored.
He came in secret with no legal permit.

DIONYSUS

By Hermes, yes! (*aside*) I wonder what they mean!

EURIPIDES

Go on then to the next. [AESCHYLUS *is silent*.

DIONYSUS

Come, Aeschylus,
Do as he says: (*to EURIPIDES*) and you look out for faults.

AESCHYLUS

"Yea, on this bank of death, I call my lord
To hear and list...."

EURIPIDES

Another repetition!
"To hear and list"—the same thing palpably!

DIONYSUS

The man was talking to the dead, you dog,
Who are always called three times—and then don't hear.

AESCHYLUS

Come, how did *you* write prologues?

EURIPIDES

Oh, I'll show you.
And if you find there any repetitions
Or any irrelevant padding,—spit upon me!

DIONYSUS

Oh, do begin. I mustn't miss those prologues
In all their exquisite exactitude!

EURIPIDES

"At first was Oedipus in happy state."

AESCHYLUS

He wasn't! He was born and bred in misery.
Did not Apollo doom him still unborn
To slay his father?...

DIONYSUS (*aside*)

His poor unborn father?

AESCHYLUS

"A happy state at first," you call it, do you?

EURIPIDES (*contemptuously resuming*)

"At first was Oedipus in happy state,
Then changed he, and became most desolate."

AESCHYLUS

He didn't. He was never anything else!
Why, he was scarcely born when they exposed him
In winter, in a pot, that he might never
Grow up and be his father's murderer.
Then off he crawled to Polybus with sore feet,
Then married an old woman, twice his age,
Who further chanced to be his mother, then
Tore out his eyes: the lucky dog he was!

DIONYSUS

At least he fought no sea-fight with a colleague
Called Erasinides!

EURIPIDES

That's no criticism.
I write my prologues singularly well!

AESCHYLUS

By Zeus, I won't go pecking word by word
At every phrase; I'll take one little oil-can,
God helping me, and send your prologues pop!

EURIPIDES

My prologues pop...with oil-cans?

AESCHYLUS

Just one oil-can!
You write them so that nothing comes amiss,
The bed-quilt, or the oil-can, or the clothes-bag,
All suit your tragic verse! Wait and I'll prove it.

EURIPIDES

You'll prove it? Really!

AESCHYLUS

Yes.

DIONYSUS

Begin to quote.

EURIPIDES

"Aegyptus, so the tale is spread afar,
With fifty youths fled in a sea-borne car,
But, reaching Argos..."

AESCHYLUS

Found his oil-can gone!

DIONYSUS

What's that about the oil-can! Drat the thing!
Quote him another prologue, and let's see.

EURIPIDES

"Dionysus, who with wand and fawn-skin dight
On great Parnassus dances in the light
Of lamps far-flashing..."

AESCHYLUS

Found his oil-can gone!

DIONYSUS

Alas! again the oil-can finds our heart!

EURIPIDES (*beginning to reflect anxiously*)

Oh, it won't come to much, though! Here's another,
With not a crack to stick the oil-can in!

"No man hath bliss in full and flawless health;
Lo, this one had high race, but little wealth;
That, base in blood, hath..."

AESCHYLUS

Found his oil-can gone!

DIONYSUS

Euripides!

EURIPIDES

Well?

DIONYSUS

Better furl your sails;
This oil-can seems inclined to raise the wind!

EURIPIDES

Bah, I disdain to give a thought to it!
I'll dash it from his hands in half a minute.

[He racks his memory.]

DIONYSUS

Well, quote another;—and beware of oil-cans.

EURIPIDES

"Great Cadmus long ago, Agenor's son,
From Sidon racing..."

AESCHYLUS

Found his oil-can gone!

DIONYSUS

Oh, this is awful! Buy the thing outright,
Before it messes every blessed prologue!

EURIPIDES

I buy him off?

DIONYSUS

I strongly recommend it.

EURIPIDES

No; I have many prologues yet to cite
Where he can't find a chink to pour his oil.

"As rapid steeds to Pisa bore him on,
Tantalian Pelops,..."

AESCHYLUS

Found his oil-can gone!

DIONYSUS

What did I tell you? There it sticks again!
You might let Pelops have a new one, though—
You get quite good ones very cheap just now.

EURIPIDES

By Zeus, not yet! I still have plenty left.
"From earth King Oineus,..."

AESCHYLUS

Found his oil-can gone!

EURIPIDES

You *must* first let me quote one line entire!
"From earth King Oineus goodly harvest won,
But, while he worshipped,..."

AESCHYLUS

Found his oil-can gone!

DIONYSUS

During the prayers! Who can have been the thief?

EURIPIDES (*desperately*)

Oh, let him be! I defy him answer this—
"Great Zeus in heaven, the word of truth has flown,..."

DIONYSUS

O mercy! *His* is certain to be gone!
They bristle with long oil-cans, hedge-hog wise,
Your prologues; they're as bunged up as your eyes!
For God's sake change the subject.

JOSEPH CONRAD

JOSEPH CONRAD is a very remarkable living writer. He was born far inland in Poland, yet he became a sailor and learned to know all the moods of the sea, and he learned as well to write the English language with great skill, exactness and beauty. Among his books may be named *Lord Jim*, *The Nigger of the Narcissus* and *Typhoon*.

The following sketch is drawn from his story called *Tout*. Marlow, a retired ship's officer, recalls to some friends seated round the table after dinner the great days of youth when everything is an adventure. He relates particularly the events that happened on his first voyage to the east—to Bangkok—on an old ship of some 400 tons. On the stern was painted her name and port, JUDEA, LONDON; and, beneath the name, a motto, DO OR DIE.

YOUTH

"When we made that start for Bangkok we had been already three months out of London. We had expected to be a fortnight or so—at the outside.

"It was January, and the weather was beautiful—the beautiful sunny winter weather that has more charm than in the summer time, because it is unexpected, and crisp, and you know it won't, it can't, last long. It's like a windfall, like a godsend, like an unexpected piece of luck.

"It lasted all down the North Sea, all down Channel; and it lasted till we were three hundred miles or so to the westward of the Lizards: then the wind went round to the sou'west and began to pipe up. In two days it blew a gale. The *Judea*, hove to, wallowed on the Atlantic like an old candle-box. It blew day after day: it blew with spite, without interval, without mercy, without rest. The world was nothing but an immensity of great foaming waves rushing at us, under a sky low enough to touch with the hand and dirty like a smoked ceiling. In the stormy space surrounding us there was as much flying spray as air. Day after day and night after night there was nothing round the ship but the howl of the wind, the tumult of the sea, the noise of water pouring over her deck. There was no rest for her and no rest for us. She tossed, she pitched, she stood on her head, she sat on her tail, she rolled, she groaned, and we had to hold on while on deck and cling to our bunks when below, in a constant effort of body and worry of mind.

"One night Mahon spoke through the small window of my berth. It opened right into my very bed, and I was lying there sleepless, in my boots, feeling as though I had not slept for years, and could not if I tried. He said excitedly—

"You got the sounding-rod in here, Marlow? I can't get the pumps to suck. By God! it's no child's play."

"I gave him the sounding-rod and lay down again, trying to think of various things—but I thought only of the pumps. When I came on deck they were still at it, and my watch relieved at the pumps. By the light of the lantern brought on deck to examine the sounding-rod I caught a glimpse of their weary, serious faces. We pumped all the four hours. We pumped all night, all day, all the week—watch and watch. She was working herself loose, and leaked badly—not enough to drown us at once, but enough to kill us with the work at the pumps. And while we pumped the ship was going from us piecemeal: the bulwarks went, the stanchions were torn out, the ventilators smashed, the cabin-door burst in. There was not a dry spot in the ship. She was being gutted bit by bit. The long-boat changed, as if by magic, into match-wood where she stood in her gripes. I had lashed her myself, and was rather proud of my handiwork, which had withstood so long the malice of the sea. And we pumped. And there was no break in the weather. The sea was white like a sheet of foam, like a caldron of boiling milk; there was not a break in the clouds, no—not the size of a man's hand—no, not for so much as ten seconds. There was for us no sky, there were for us no stars, no sun, no universe—nothing but angry clouds and an infuriated sea. We pumped watch and watch, for dear life; and it seemed to last for months, for years, for all eternity, as though we had been dead and gone to a hell for sailors. We forgot the day of the week, the name of the month, what year it was, and whether we had ever been ashore. The sails blew away, she lay broadside on under a weather-cloth, the ocean poured over her, and we did not care. We turned those handles, and had the eyes of idiots. As soon as we had crawled on deck I used to take a round turn with a rope about the men, the pumps, and the mainmast, and we turned, we turned incessantly, with the water to our waists, to our necks, over our heads. It was all one. We had forgotten how it felt to be dry.

"And there was somewhere in me the thought: By Jove! this

is the deuce of an adventure—something you read about; and it is my first voyage as second mate—and I am only twenty—and here I am lasting it out as well as any of these men, and keeping my chaps up to the mark. I was pleased. I would not have given up the experience for worlds. I had moments of exultation. Whenever the old dismantled craft pitched heavily with her counter high in the air, she seemed to me to throw up, like an appeal, like a defiance, like a cry to the clouds without mercy, the words written on her stern ‘JUDEA, London. Do or Die.’

“O youth! The strength of it, the faith of it, the imagination of it! To me she was not an old rattle-trap carting about the world a lot of coal for a freight—to me she was the endeavour, the test, the trial of life. I think of her with pleasure, with affection, with regret—as you would think of some one dead you have loved. I shall never forget her....

“One night when tied to the mast, as I explained, we were pumping on, deafened with the wind, and without spirit enough in us to wish ourselves dead, a heavy sea crashed aboard, and swept clean over us. As soon as I got my breath I shouted, as in duty bound, ‘Keep on boys!’ when suddenly I felt something hard floating on deck strike the calf of my leg. I made a grab at it and missed. It was so dark we could not see each other’s faces within a foot—you understand.

“After that thump the ship kept quiet for a while, and the thing, whatever it was, struck my leg again. This time I caught it—and it was a sauce-pan. At first, being stupid with fatigue and thinking of nothing but the pumps, I did not understand what I had in my hand. Suddenly it dawned upon me, and I shouted, ‘Boys, the house on deck is gone. Leave this, and let’s look for the cook.’

“There was a deck house forward, which contained the galley, the cook’s berth, and the quarters of the crew. As we had expected for days to see it swept away, the hands had been ordered to sleep in the cabin—the only safe place in the ship. The steward, Abraham, however, persisted in clinging to his berth, stupidly, like a mule—from sheer fright I believe, like an animal that won’t leave a stable falling in an earthquake. So we went to look for him. It was chancing death, since once out of our lashings we were as exposed as if on a raft. But we went. The house was

shattered as if a shell had exploded inside. Most of it had gone overboard—stove, men's quarters, and their property, all was gone; but two posts, holding a portion of the bulkhead to which Abraham's bunk was attached, remained as if by a miracle. We groped in the ruins and came upon this, and there he was, sitting in his bunk, surrounded by foam and wreckage, jabbering cheerfully to himself. He was out of his mind; completely and for ever mad, with this sudden shock coming upon the fag-end of his endurance. We snatched him up, lugged him aft, and pitched him head-first down the cabin companion. You understand there was no time to carry him down with infinite precautions and wait to see how he got on. Those below would pick him up at the bottom of the stairs all right. We were in a hurry to go back to the pumps. That business could not wait. A bad leak is an inhuman thing.

"One would think that the sole purpose of that fiendish gale had been to make a lunatic of that poor devil of a mulatto. It eased before morning, and the next day the sky cleared, and as the sea went down the leak took up. When it came to bending a fresh set of sails the crew demanded to put back—and really there was nothing else to do. Boats gone, decks swept clean, cabin gutted, men without a stitch but what they stood in, stores spoiled, ship strained. We put her head for home, and—would you believe it? The wind came east right in our teeth. It blew fresh, it blew continuously. We had to beat up every inch of the way, but she did not leak so badly, the water keeping comparatively smooth. Two hours' pumping in every four is no joke—but it kept her afloat as far as Falmouth.

"The good people there live on casualties of the sea, and no doubt were glad to see us. A hungry crowd of shipwrights sharpened their chisels at the sight of that carcass of a ship. And, by Jove! they had pretty pickings off us before they were done. I fancy the owner was already in a tight place. There were delays. Then it was decided to take part of the cargo out and caulk her topsides. This was done, the repairs finished, cargo re-shipped; a new crew came on board, and we went out—for Bankok. At the end of a week we were back again. The crew said they weren't going to Bankok—a hundred and fifty days' passage—in a something hooker that wanted pumping eight

hours out of the twenty-four; and the nautical papers inserted again the little paragraph: 'JUDEA, Barque. Tyne to Bankok; coals; put back to Falmouth leaky and with crew refusing duty.'

* * * * *

"A hulk came alongside, took our cargo, and then we went into dry dock to get our copper stripped. No wonder she leaked. The poor thing, strained beyond endurance by the gale, had, as if in disgust, spat out all the oakum of her lower seams. She was recaulked, new coppered, and made as tight as a bottle. We went back to the hulk and re-shipped our cargo.

"Then, on a fine moonlight night, all the rats left the ship.

"We had been infested with them. They had destroyed our sails, consumed more stores than the crew, affably shared our beds and our dangers, and now, when the ship was made seaworthy, concluded to clear out. I called Mahon to enjoy the spectacle. Rat after rat appeared on our rail, took a last look over his shoulder, and leaped with a hollow thud into the empty hulk. We tried to count them, but soon lost the tale. Mahon said: 'Well, well! don't talk to me about the intelligence of rats. They ought to have left before, when we had that narrow squeak from foundering. There you have the proof how silly the superstition is about them. They leave a good ship for an old rotten hulk, where there is nothing to eat, too, the fools!... I don't believe they know what is safe or what is good for them, any more than you or I.'

"And after some more talk we agreed that the wisdom of rats had been grossly overrated, being in fact no greater than that of men.

"The story of the ship was known, by this, all up the Channel from Land's End to the Forelands, and we could get no crew on the south coast. They sent us one all complete from Liverpool, and we left once more—for Bankok.

* * * * *

"The old bark lumbered on, heavy with her age and the burden of her cargo, while I lived the life of youth in ignorance and hope. She lumbered on through an interminable procession of days; and the fresh gilding flashed back at the setting sun, seemed to cry out over the darkening sea the words painted on her stern, 'JUDEA, London. Do or Die.'

"Then we entered the Indian Ocean and steered northerly for Java Head. The winds were light. Weeks slipped by. She crawled on, 'do or die,' and people at home began to think of posting us as overdue.

"One Saturday evening, I being off duty, the men asked me to give them an extra bucket of water or so—for washing clothes. As I did not wish to screw on the fresh water pump so late, I went forward whistling, and with a key in my hand to unlock the forepeak scuttle, intending to serve the water out of a spare tank we kept there.

"The smell down below was as unexpected as it was frightful. One would have thought hundreds of paraffin lamps had been flaring and smoking in that hole for days. I was glad to get out. The man with me coughed and said, 'Funny smell, sir.' I answered negligently, 'It's good for the health they say,' and walked aft.

"The first thing I did was to put my head down the square of the midship ventilator. As I lifted the lid a visible breath, something like a thin fog, a puff of faint haze, rose from the opening. The ascending air was hot, and had a heavy, sooty, paraffiny smell. I gave one sniff, and put down the lid gently. It was no use choking myself. The cargo was on fire.

"Next day she began to smoke in earnest. You see it was to be expected, for though the coal was of a safe kind, that cargo had been so handled, so broken up with handling, that it looked more like smithy coal than anything else. Then it had been wetted—more than once. It rained all the time we were taking it back from the hulk, and now with this long passage it got heated, and there was another case of spontaneous combustion.

"The captain called us into the cabin. He had a chart spread on the table, and looked unhappy. He said, 'The coast of West Australia is near, but I mean to proceed to our destination. It is the hurricane month too; but we will just keep her head for Bangkok, and fight the fire. No more putting back anywhere, if we all get roasted. We will try first to stifle this 'ere damned combustion by want of air.'

"We tried. We battened down everything, and still she smoked. The smoke kept coming out through imperceptible crevices; it forced itself through bulkheads and covers; it oozed here and there and everywhere in slender threads, in an invisible film, in an incomprehensible manner. It made its way into the

cabin, into the forecabin; it poisoned the sheltered places on the deck, it could be sniffed as high as the main yard. It was clear that if the smoke came out the air came in. This was disheartening. This combustion refused to be stifled.

"We resolved to try water, and took the hatches off. Enormous volumes of smoke, whitish, yellowish, thick, greasy, misty, choking, ascended as high as the trucks. All hands cleared out aft. Then the poisonous cloud blew away, and we went back to work in a smoke that was no thicker now than that of an ordinary factory chimney.

"We rigged the force pump, got the hose along, and by and by it burst. Well, it was as old as the ship—a prehistoric hose, and past repair. Then we pumped with the feeble head-pump, drew water with buckets, and in this way managed in time to pour lots of Indian Ocean into the main hatch. The bright stream flashed in sunshine, fell into a layer of white crawling smoke, and vanished on the black surface of coal. Steam ascended mingling with the smoke. We poured salt water as into a barrel without a bottom. It was our fate to pump in that ship, to pump out of her, to pump into her; and after keeping water out of her to save ourselves from being drowned, we frantically poured water into her to save ourselves from being burnt.

"And she crawled on, do or die, in the serene weather. The sky was a miracle of purity, a miracle of azure. The sea was polished, was blue, was pellucid, was sparkling like a precious stone, extending on all sides, all round to the horizon—as if the whole terrestrial globe had been one jewel, one colossal sapphire, a single gem fashioned into a planet. And on the lustre of the great calm waters the *JUDEA* glided imperceptibly, enveloped in languid and unclean vapours, in a lazy cloud that drifted to leeward, light and slow: a pestiferous cloud defiling the splendour of the sea and sky.

"All this time of course we saw no fire. The cargo smouldered at the bottom somewhere. Once Mahon, as we were working side by side, said to me with a queer smile: 'Now, if she only would spring a tidy leak—like that time when we first left the Channel—it would put a stopper on this fire. Wouldn't it?' I remarked irrelevantly, 'Do you remember the rats?'

"We tried everything. We even made an attempt to dig down to the fire. No good, of course. No man could remain more than a minute below. Mahon, who went first, fainted there, and the man who went to fetch him out did likewise. We lugged them out on deck. Then I leaped down to show how easily it could be done. They had learned wisdom by that time, and contented themselves by fishing for me with a chain-hook tied to a broom-handle, I believe. I did not offer to go and fetch up my shovel, which was left down below.

"Things began to look bad. We put the long-boat into the water. The second boat was ready to swing out. We had also another, a 14-foot thing, on davits aft, where it was quite safe.

"Then, behold, the smoke suddenly decreased. We redoubled our efforts to flood the bottom of the ship. In two days there was no smoke at all. Everybody was on the broad grin. This was on a Friday. On Saturday no work, but sailing the ship of course, was done. The men washed their clothes and their faces for the first time in a fortnight, and had a special dinner given them. They spoke of spontaneous combustion with contempt, and implied *they* were the boys to put out combustions. Somehow we all felt as though we each had inherited a large fortune. But a beastly smell of burning hung about the ship. Captain Beard had hollow eyes and sunken cheeks. I had never noticed so much before how twisted and bowed he was. He and Mahon prowled soberly about hatches and ventilators, sniffing. It struck me suddenly poor Mahon was a very, very old chap. As to me, I was as pleased and proud as though I had helped to win a great naval battle. O! Youth!

"The night was fine. In the morning a homeward-bound ship passed us hull down—the first we had seen for months; but we were nearing the land at last, Java Head being about 190 miles off, and nearly due north.

"Next day it was my watch on deck from eight to twelve. At breakfast the captain observed, 'It's wonderful how that smell hangs about the cabin.' About ten, the mate being on the poop, I stepped down on the main deck for a moment. The carpenter's bench stood abaft the main mast: I leaned against it sucking at my pipe, and the carpenter, a young chap, came to talk to me. He remarked, 'I think we have done very well,

haven't we?' and then I perceived with annoyance the fool was trying to tilt the bench. I said curtly, 'Don't, Chips,' and immediately became aware of a queer sensation, of an absurd delusion,—I seemed somehow to be in the air. I heard all round me like a pent-up breath released—as if a thousand giants simultaneously had said Phoo!—and felt a dull concussion which made my ribs ache suddenly. No doubt about it—I was in the air and my body was describing a short parabola. But short as it was, I had the time to think several thoughts in, as far as I can remember, the following order: 'This can't be the carpenter—What is it?—Some accident—Submarine volcano? Coals, gas!—By Jove! We are being blown up—Everybody's dead—I am falling into the afterhatch—I see fire in it.'

"The coal dust suspended in the air of the hold had glowed dull red at the moment of the explosion. In the twinkling of an eye, in an infinitesimal fraction of a second since the first tilt of the bench, I was sprawling full length on the cargo. I picked myself up and scrambled out. It was quick like a rebound. The deck was a wilderness of smashed timber, lying crosswise like trees in a wood after a hurricane; an immense curtain of soiled rags waved gently before me—it was the main sail blown to strips. I thought, 'The masts will be toppling over directly'; and to get out of the way bolted on all fours towards the poop-ladder. The first person I saw was Mahon, with eyes like saucers, his mouth open, and the long white hair standing straight on end round his head like a silver halo. He was just about to go down when the sight of the main deck stirring, heaving up, and changing into splinters before his eyes, petrified him on the top step. I stared at him in unbelief, and he stared at me with a queer kind of shocked curiosity. I did not know that I had no hair, no eyebrows, no eyelashes, that my young moustache was burnt off, that my face was black, one cheek laid open, my nose cut, and my chin bleeding. I had lost my cap, one of my slippers, and my shirt was torn to rags. Of all this I was not aware. I was amazed to see the ship still afloat, the poop deck whole—and, most of all, to see anybody alive. Also the peace of the sky and the serenity of the sea were distinctly surprising. I suppose I expected to see them convulsed with horror.

"No one was killed or even disabled, but every one was more or less hurt. You should have seen them! Some were in rags, with black faces, like coalheavers, like sweeps, and had bullet heads that seemed closely cropped, but were in fact singed to the skin. Others, of the watch below, awakened by being shot out from their collapsing bunks, shivered incessantly, and kept on groaning even as we went about our work. But they all worked. That crew of Liverpool hard cases had in them the right stuff. It's my experience they always have. It is the sea that gives it—the vastness, the loneliness surrounding their dark stolid souls. Ah! Well! We stumbled, we crept, we fell, we barked our shins on the wreckage, we hauled. The masts stood, but we did not know how much they might be charred down below. It was nearly calm, but a long swell ran from the west and made her roll. They might go at any moment. We looked at them with apprehension. One could not foresee which way they would fall.

"Then we retreated aft and looked about us. The deck was a tangle of planks on edge, of planks on end, of splinters, of ruined woodwork. The masts rose from that chaos like big trees above a matted undergrowth. The interstices of that mass of wreckage were full of something whitish, sluggish, stirring—of something that was like a greasy fog. The smoke of the invisible fire was coming up again, was trailing, like a poisonous thick mist in some valley choked with dead wood. Already lazy wisps were beginning to curl upwards amongst the mass of splinters. Here and there a piece of timber, stuck upright, resembled a post. Half of a fife-rail had been shot through the foresail, and the sky made a patch of glorious blue in the ignobly soiled canvas. A portion of several boards holding together had fallen across the rail, and one end protruded overboard, like a gangway leading upon nothing, like a gangway leading over the deep sea, leading to death—as if inviting us to walk the plank at once and be done with our ridiculous troubles. And still the air, the sky,—a ghost, something invisible was hailing the ship.

"Some one had the sense to look over, and there was the helmsman, who had impulsively jumped overboard, anxious to come back. He yelled and swam lustily like a merman, keeping up with the ship. We threw him a rope, and presently he stood amongst us streaming with water and very crest-fallen. The

captain had surrendered the wheel, and apart, elbow on rail, and chin in hand, gazed at the sea wistfully. We asked ourselves 'What next?' I thought, 'Now, this is something like. This is great. I wonder what will happen.' O youth!

"Suddenly Mahon sighted a steamer far astern. Captain Beard said: 'We may do something with her yet.' We hoisted two flags which said in the international language of the sea, 'On fire. Want immediate assistance.' The steamer grew bigger rapidly, and by-and-by spoke with two flags on her foremast, 'I am coming to your assistance.'

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"At noon the steamer began to tow. She went ahead slim and high, and what was left of the JUDEA followed at the end of 70 fathom of tow-rope,—followed her swiftly like a cloud of smoke with mast-heads protruding above. We went aloft to furl the sails. We coughed on the yards, and were careful about the bunts. Do you see the lot of us there, putting a neat furl on the sails of that ship doomed to arrive nowhere? There was not a man who didn't think that at any moment the masts would topple over. From aloft we could not see the ship for smoke, and they worked carefully, passing the gaskets with even turns. 'Harbour furl—aloft there'! cried Mahon from below.

"You understand this? I don't think one of those chaps expected to get down in the usual way. When we did I heard them say to each other, 'Well, I thought we would come down overboard, in a lump—sticks and all—blame me if I didn't.' 'That's what I was thinking to myself,' would answer wearily another battered and bandaged scarecrow. And mind, these were men without the drilled-in habit of obedience. To an onlooker they would be a lot of profane scallywags without a redeeming point. What made them do it—what made them obey me, when I, thinking consciously how fine it was, made them drop the bunt of the foresail twice to try and do it better? What? They had no professional reputation—no examples, no praise. It wasn't a sense of duty; they all knew well enough how to shirk, and laze, and dodge—when they had a mind to it—and mostly they had. Was it the two pounds ten a month that sent them there? They didn't think their pay half good enough. No; it was something

in them, something inborn, and subtle and everlasting. I don't say positively that the crew of a French or German merchantman wouldn't have done it, but I doubt whether it would have been done in the same way. There was a completeness in it, something solid like a principle and masterful like an instinct—a disclosure of something secret—of that hidden something, that gift of good or evil that makes racial difference, that shapes the fate of nations.

"It was that night at ten that, for the first time since we had been fighting it, we saw the fire. The speed of the towing had fanned the smouldering destruction. A blue gleam appeared forward, shining below the wreck of the deck. It wavered in patches, it seemed to stir and creep like the light of a glowworm. I saw it first, and told Mahon. 'Then the game's up,' he said. 'We had better stop this towing, or she will burst out suddenly fore and aft before we can clear out.' We set up a yell; rang bells to attract their attention; they towed on. At last Mahon and I had to crawl forward and cut the rope with an axe. There was no time to cast off the lashings. Red tongues could be seen licking the wilderness of splinters under our feet as we made our way back to the poop.

"Of course they very soon found out in the steamer that the rope was gone. She gave a loud blast of her whistle, her lights were seen sweeping in a wide circle, she came up ranging close alongside, and stopped. We were all in a tight group on the poop looking at her. Every man had saved a little bundle or a bag. Suddenly a conical flame with a twisted top shot up forward and threw upon the black sea a circle of light, with the two vessels side by side and heaving gently in its centre. Captain Beard had been sitting on the gratings still and mute for hours, but now he rose slowly and advanced in front of us, to the mizzen-shrouds. Captain Nash hailed: 'Come along! Look sharp. I have mailbags on board. I will take you and your boats to Singapore.'

"'Thank you! no!' said our skipper. 'We must see the last of the ship!'

"'I can't stand by any longer,' shouted the other. 'Mails—you know.'

"'Ay! Ay! We are all right!'

"'Very well! I'll report you in Singapore.... Goodbye!'

"He waved his hand. Our men dropped their bundles quietly. The steamer moved ahead, and passing out of the circle of light, vanished at once from our sight, dazzled by the fire which burned fiercely. And then I knew that I would see the East first as commander of a small boat. I thought it fine; and the fidelity to the old ship was fine. We should see the last of her. Oh the glamour of youth! Oh the fire of it, more dazzling than the flames of the burning ship, throwing a magic light on the wide earth, leaping audaciously to the sky, presently to be quenched by time, more cruel, more pitiless, more bitter than the sea—and like the flames of the burning ship surrounded by an impenetrable night.

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"Half an hour passed. Suddenly there was a frightful racket, rattle, clanking of chain, hiss of water, and millions of sparks flew up into the shivering column of smoke that stood leaning slightly above the ship. The cat-heads had burned away, and the two red-hot anchors had gone to the bottom, tearing out after them two hundred fathom of red-hot chain. The ship trembled, the mass of flame swayed as if ready to collapse, and the fore top-gallant-mast fell. It darted down like an arrow of fire, shot under, and instantly leaping up within an oar's-length of the boats, floated quietly, very black on the luminous sea.

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"I walked up to the skipper and shook him by the shoulder. At last he opened his eyes, but did not move. 'Time to leave her, sir,' I said quietly.

"He got up painfully, looked at the flames, at the sea sparkling round the ship, and black, black as ink farther away; he looked at the stars shining dim through a thin veil of smoke in a sky black, black as Erebus.

"'Youngest first,' he said.

"And the ordinary seaman wiping his mouth with the back of his hand, got up, clambered over the taffrail, and vanished. Others followed. One, on the point of going over, stopped short to drain his bottle, and with a great swing of his arm flung it at the fire, 'Take this'! he cried.

"The skipper lingered disconsolately, and we left him to

commune alone for awhile with his first command. Then I went up again and brought him away at last. It was time. The ironwork on the poop was hot to the touch.

"Then the painter of the long-boat was cut, and the three boats, tied together, drifted clear of the ship. It was just sixteen hours after the explosion that we abandoned her. Mahon had charge of the second boat, and I had the smallest—the 14-foot thing. The long-boat would have taken the lot of us; but the skipper said we must save as much property as we could—for the underwriters—and so I got my first command. I had two men with me, a bag of biscuits, a few tins of meat, and a breaker of water. I was ordered to keep close to the long-boat, that in case of bad weather we might be taken into her.

"And do you know what I thought. I thought I would part company as soon as I could. I wanted to have my first command all to myself. I wasn't going to sail in a squadron if there were a chance for independent cruising. I would make land by myself. I would beat the other boats. Youth! All youth! The silly, charming, beautiful youth.

"But we did not make a start at once. We must see the last of the ship. And so the boats drifted about that night, heaving and setting on the swell. The men dozed, waked, sighed, groaned. I looked at the burning ship.

"Between the darkness of earth and heaven she was burning fiercely upon a disc of purple sea shot by the blood-red play of gleams; upon a disc of water glittering and sinister. A high, clear flame, an immense and lonely flame ascended from the ocean, and from its summit the black smoke poured continuously at the sky. She burned furiously, mournful and imposing like a funeral pile kindled in the night, surrounded by the sea, watched over by the stars. A magnificent death had come like a grace, like a gift, like a reward to that old ship at the end of her laborious days. The surrender of her weary ghost to the keeping of stars and sea was stirring like the sight of a glorious triumph. The masts fell just before daybreak, and for a moment there was a burst and turmoil of sparks that seemed to fill with flying fire the night patient and watchful, the vast night lying silent upon the sea. At daylight she was only a charred shell, floating still under a cloud of smoke and bearing a glowing mass of coal within.

"Then the oars were got out, and the boats forming in a line moved round her remains as if in procession—the long-boat leading. As we pulled across her stern a slim dart of fire shot out viciously at us, and suddenly she went down, head first in a great hiss of steam. The unconsumed stern was the last to sink; but the paint had gone, had cracked, had peeled off, and there were no letters, there was no word, no stubborn device that was like her soul, to flash at the rising sun her creed and her name.

"We made our way north. A breeze sprang up, and about noon all the boats came together for the last time. I had no mast or sail in mine, but I made a mast out of a spare oar and hoisted a boat awning for a sail, with a boat-hook for a yard. She was certainly over-masted but I had the satisfaction of knowing that with the wind aft I could beat the other two. I had to wait for them. Then we all had a look at the captain's chart, and, after a sociable meal of hard bread and water, got our last instructions. These were simple: steer north, and keep together as much as possible. 'Be careful with that jury-rig, Marlow,' said the captain; and Mahon, as I sailed proudly past his boat, wrinkled his curved nose and hailed, 'You will sail that ship of yours under water, if you don't look out, young fellow.' He was a malicious old man—and may the deep sea where he sleeps now rock him gently, rock him tenderly to the end of time!

"Before sunset a thick rain-squall passed over the two boats, which were far astern, and that was the last I saw of them for a time. Next day I sat steering my cockle-shell—my first command—with nothing but water and sky around me. I did sight in the afternoon the upper-sails of a ship far away, but said nothing, and my men did not notice her. You see I was afraid she might be homeward bound, and I had no mind to turn back from the portals of the East. I was steering for Java—another blessed name—like Bankok, you know. I steered many days.

"I need not tell you what it is to be knocking about in an open boat. I remember nights and days of calm when we pulled, we pulled, and the boat seemed to stand still, as if bewitched within the circle of the sea horizon. I remember the heat, the deluge of rain-squalls that kept us baling for dear life (but filled our water-cask) and I remember sixteen hours on end with a mouth dry as a cinder and a steering-oar over the stern to keep my first command

head on to a breaking sea. I did not know how good a man I was till then. I remember the drawn faces, the dejected figures of my two men, and I remember my youth and the feeling that will never come back any more—the feeling that I could last for ever, outlast the sea, the earth, and all men; the deceitful feeling that lures us on to joys, to perils, to love, to vain effort—to death; the triumphant conviction of strength, the heat of life in the handful of dust, the glow in the heart that with every year grows dim, grows cold, grows small, and expires—and expires too soon, too soon—before life itself.

“And this is how I see the East. I have seen its secret places and have looked into its very soul; but now I see it always from a small boat, a high outline of mountains, blue and afar in the morning; like faint mist at noon; a jagged wall of purple at sunset. I have the feel of the oar in my hand, the vision of a scorching blue sea in my eyes. And I see a bay, a wide bay, smooth as glass and polished like ice, shimmering in the dark. A red light burns far off upon the gloom of the land, and the night is soft and warm. We drag at the oars with aching arms, and suddenly a puff of wind, a puff faint and tepid and laden with strange odours of blossoms, of aromatic wood, comes out of the still night—the first sight of the East on my face. That I can never forget. It was impalpable and enslaving, like a charm, like a whispered promise of mysterious delight.

“We had been pulling this finishing spell for eleven hours. Two pulled and he whose turn it was to rest sat at the tiller. We had made out the red light in that bay and steered for it, guessing it must mark some small coasting port. We passed two vessels, outlandish, and high-sterned, sleeping at anchor, and, approaching the light, now very dim, ran the boat’s nose against the end of a jutting wharf. We were blind with fatigue. My men dropped the oars and fell off the thwarts as if dead. I made fast to a pile. A current rippled softly. The scented obscurity of the shore was grouped into vast masses, a density of colossal clumps of vegetation, probably—mute and fantastic shapes. And at their foot the semi-circle of a beach gleamed faintly, like an illusion. There was not a light, not a stir, not a sound. The mysterious East faced me, perfumed like a flower, silent like death, dark like a grave.”

SWINBURNE

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE (1837-1909), the son of an English admiral, was born in London and educated at Eton and Oxford. Among his books of verse may be named *Atalanta in Calydon*, *Poems and Ballads*, *Songs before Sunrise* and *Tristram of Lyonesse*. Swinburne, like Byron, was a good swimmer, and many of his poems refer to the sea. He has written, too, much about France and Italy and their stirring history. Swinburne's verse is as remarkable for its fulness of language as for its rhythm. The stanzas that follow are taken from a poem called *The Triumph of Time*.

OUR MOTHER THE SEA

O fair green-girdled mother of mine,
Sea, that art clothed with the sun and the rain,
Thy sweet hard kisses are strong like wine,
Thy large embraces are keen like pain.
Save me and hide me with all thy waves,
Find me one grave of thy thousand graves,
Those pure cold populous graves of thine
Wrought without hand in a world without stain.

I shall sleep, and move with the moving ships,
Change as the winds change, veer in the tide;
My lips will feast on the foam of thy lips,
I shall rise with thy rising, with thee subside;
Sleep, and not know if she be, if she were,
Filled full with life to the eyes and hair,
As a rose is fulfilled to the roseleaf tips
With splendid summer and perfume and pride.

This woven raiment of nights and days,
Were it once cast off and unwound from me,
Naked and glad would I walk in thy ways,
Alive and aware of thy ways and thee;
Clear of the whole world, hidden at home,
Clothed with the green and crowned with the foam,
A pulse of the life of thy straits and bays,
A vein in the heart of the streams of the sea.

Fair mother, fed with the lives of men,
Thou art subtle and cruel of heart, men say.
Thou hast taken, and shalt not render again;
Thou art full of thy dead, and cold as they.
But death is the worst that comes of thee;
Thou art fed with our dead, O mother, O sea,
But when hast thou fed on our hearts? or when,
Having given us love, hast thou taken away?

O tender-hearted, O perfect lover,
Thy lips are bitter, and sweet thine heart.
The hopes that hurt and the dreams that hover,
Shall they not vanish away and apart?
But thou, thou art sure, thou art older than earth;
Thou art strong for death and fruitful of birth;
Thy depths conceal and thy gulfs discover;
From the first thou wert; in the end thou art.

From *Erechtheus*

Poseidon, god of the sea, warred against Athens, and Erechtheus the king and many others were slain. The goddess Pallas Athene appeared to the elders of the city and showed how that these heroes had not died in vain, as Athens should become the most famous of cities, and the sea, once its foe, should henceforward be its friend. The words here put into the mouths of the Athenian elders seem specially suitable for utterance by the countrymen of Drake, Nelson and the other heroes, famous or nameless, who have made the sea memorable for all Britons.

From the depth of the springs of my spirit a fountain is poured of
thanksgiving,
My country, my mother, for thee,
That thy dead for their death shall have life in thy sight and a
name everliving
At heart of thy people to be.
In the darkness of change on the waters of time they shall turn
from afar
To the beam of this dawn for a beacon, the light of these pyres for
a star.

They shall see thee who love and take comfort, who hate thee
shall see and take warning,
Our mother that makest us free;
And the sons of thine earth shall have help of the waves that made
war on their morning,
And friendship and fame of the sea.

EDMUND BURKE

EDMUND BURKE (1729-97) was born in Dublin and educated at Trinity college in that city. He came to London, and, after studying law, entered parliament, and soon gained public notice by his mastery both of facts and of eloquence. He took the Whig side, and opposed the policy of Lord North in respect of the attempt to subdue the American colonies. He was the enemy of oppression in India and took a leading part in the trial of Warren Hastings, who had been guilty, as Burke considered, of misgovernment and cruelty. On the outbreak of the French revolution, Burke took the side of the French government against the revolutionists, and was writing against the disorders in France when he died. Burke was one of the famous literary circle of which Dr Johnson was the chief. His finest works are political pamphlets and speeches. The passage that follows is taken from a speech on the Nabob of Arcot's debts. Hyder Ali, Sultan of Mysore, attacked the Carnatic in S.E. India, a territory under the dominion of the East India Company.

THE DEVASTATION OF THE CARNATIC

Among the victims to this magnificent plan of universal plunder, worthy of the heroic avarice of the projectors, you have all heard (and he has made himself to be well remembered) of an Indian chief called Hyder Ali Khan. This man possessed the western, as the company under the name of the Nabob of Arcot does the eastern division of the Carnatic. It was among the leading measures in the design of this cabal (according to their own emphatic language) to *extirpate* this Hyder Ali. They declared the Nabob of Arcot to be his sovereign, and himself to be a rebel, and publicly invested their instrument with the sovereignty of the kingdom of Mysore. But their victim was not of the passive kind. They were soon obliged to conclude a treaty of peace and close alliance with this rebel, at the gates of Madras. Both before and since this treaty, every principle of policy pointed out this power as a natural alliance; and on his part, it was courted by every sort of amicable office. But the cabinet council of English

creditors would not suffer their Nabob of Arcot to sign the treaty, nor even to give to a prince, at least his equal, the ordinary titles of respect and courtesy. From that time forward, a continued plot was carried on within the divan, black and white, of the Nabob of Arcot, for the destruction of Hyder Ali. As to the outward members of the double, or rather treble government of Madras, which had signed the treaty, they were always prevented by some over-ruling influence (which they do not describe, but which cannot be misunderstood) from performing what justice and interest combined so evidently to enforce.

When at length Hyder Ali found that he had to do with men who either would sign no convention, or whom no treaty, and no signature could bind, and who were the determined enemies of human intercourse itself, he decreed to make the country possessed by these incorrigible and predestinated criminals a memorable example to mankind. He resolved, in the gloomy recesses of a mind capacious of such things, to leave the whole Carnatic an everlasting monument of vengeance, and to put perpetual desolation as a barrier between him and those, against whom the faith which holds the moral elements of the world together was no protection. He became at length so confident of his force, so collected in his might, that he made no secret whatsoever of his dreadful resolution. Having terminated his disputes with every enemy, and every rival, who buried their mutual animosities in their common detestation against the creditors of the Nabob of Arcot, he drew from every quarter whatever a savage ferocity could add to his new rudiments in the arts of destruction; and compounding all the materials of fury, havoc, and desolation, into one black cloud, he hung for a while on the declivities of the mountains. Whilst the authors of all these evils were idly and stupidly gazing on this menacing meteor, which blackened all their horizon, it suddenly burst, and poured down the whole of its contents upon the plains of the Carnatic—Then ensued a scene of woe, the like of which no eye had seen, no heart conceived, and which no tongue can adequately tell. All the horrors of war before known or heard of, were mercy to that new havoc. A storm of universal fire blasted every field, consumed every house, destroyed every temple. The miserable inhabitants flying from their flaming villages, in part were slaughtered; others, without

regard to sex, to age, to the respect of rank, or sacredness of function, fathers torn from children, husbands from wives, enveloped in a whirlwind of cavalry, and amidst the goading spears of drivers, and the trampling of pursuing horses, were swept into captivity, in an unknown and hostile land. Those who were able to evade this tempest, fled to the walled cities. But escaping from fire, sword, and exile, they fell into the jaws of famine.

The alms of the settlement, in this dreadful exigency, were certainly liberal; and all was done by charity that private charity could do; but it was a people in beggary; it was a nation which stretched out its hands for food. For months together these creatures of sufferance, whose very excess and luxury in their most plenteous days had fallen short of the allowance of our austere fasts, silent, patient, resigned, without sedition or disturbance, almost without complaint, perished by an hundred a day in the streets of Madras; every day seventy at least laid their bodies in the streets, or on the glacis of Tanjore, and expired of famine in the granary of India. I was going to awake your justice towards this unhappy part of our fellow citizens, by bringing before you some of the circumstances of this plague of hunger. Of all the calamities which beset and waylay the life of man, this comes the nearest to our heart, and is that wherein the proudest of us all feels himself to be nothing more than he is: but I find myself unable to manage it with decorum; these details are of a species of horror so nauseous and disgusting; they are so degrading to the sufferers and to the hearers; they are so humiliating to human nature itself, that, on better thoughts, I find it more advisable to throw a pall over this hideous object, and to leave it to your general conceptions.

For eighteen months, without intermission, this destruction raged from the gates of Madras to the gates of Tanjore; and so completely did these masters in their art, Hyder Ali, and his more ferocious son, absolve themselves of their impious vow, that when the British armies traversed, as they did, the Carnatic for hundreds of miles in all directions, through the whole line of their march they did not see one man, not one woman, not one child, not one four-footed beast of any description whatever. One dead, uniform silence reigned over the whole region.

RUSKIN

JOHN RUSKIN (1819-1900), writer on art and life, was born in London, and educated first privately, and then at Christ Church, Oxford. His earliest works were *Modern Painters*, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* and *Stones of Venice*, all lengthy books on art. He produced many lectures and essays on various subjects, and these, collected, form some of his shorter and more popular works, such as *Sesame and Lilies*, *The Crown of Wild Olive*, *Munera Pulveris* and *Unto this Last*. Most children know his fairy tale *The King of the Golden River*. Ruskin was a sincere man of strong views, and his books—often splendidly written—had a great influence on the thoughts and lives of English people in the nineteenth century. The passages that follow are two descriptions taken from *Modern Painters*.

THE CAMPAGNA

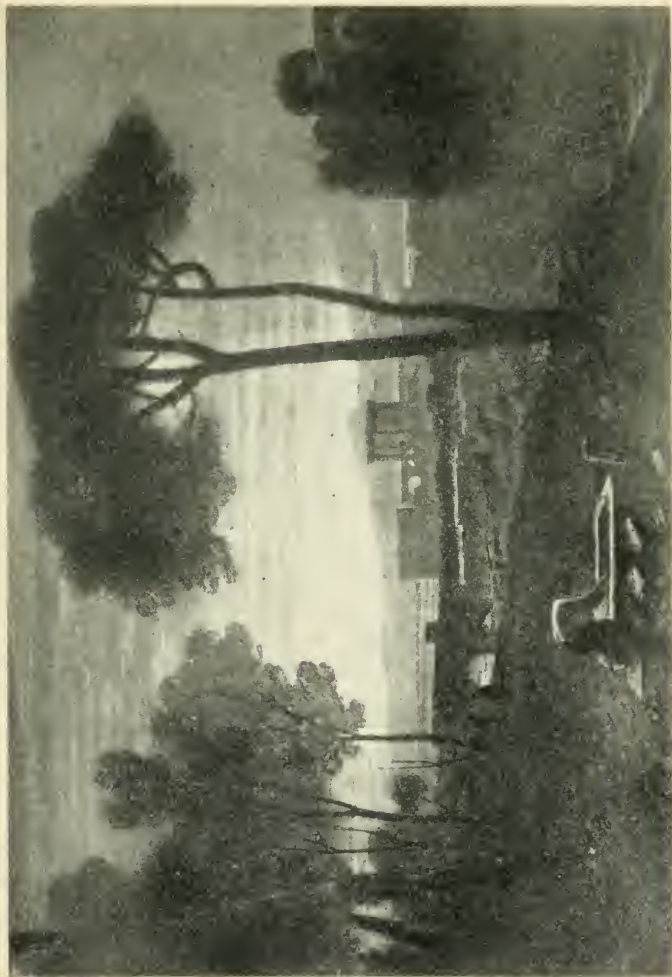
I

It had been wild weather when I left Rome, and all across the Campagna the clouds were sweeping in sulphurous blue, with a clap of thunder or two, and breaking gleams of sun along the Claudian aqueduct lighting up the infinity of its arches like the bridge of chaos. But as I climbed the long slope of the Alban Mount, the storm swept finally to the north, and the noble outline of the domes of Albano, and graceful darkness of its ilex grove, rose against pure streaks of alternate blue and amber; the upper sky gradually flushing through the last fragments of rain-cloud in deep palpitating azure, half aether and half dew. The noonday sun came slanting down the rocky slopes of La Riccia, and their masses of entangled and tall foliage, whose autumnal tints were mixed with the wet verdure of a thousand evergreens, were penetrated with it, as with rain. I cannot call it colour, it was conflagration. Purple, and crimson, and scarlet, like the curtains of God's tabernacle, the rejoicing trees sank into the valley in showers of light, every separate leaf quivering with buoyant and burning life; each, as it turned to reflect or to transmit the sunbeam, first a torch and then an emerald. Far up into the recesses of the valley, the green vistas arched like the hollows of mighty waves of some crystalline sea, with the arbutus flowers dashed along their flanks for foam, and silver flakes of orange spray tossed into the air around them, breaking over the grey

walls of rock into a thousand separate stars, fading and kindling alternately as the weak wind lifted and let them fall. Every glade of grass burned like the golden floor of heaven, opening in sudden gleams as the foliage broke, and closed above it, as sheet-lightning opens in a cloud at sunset; the motionless masses of dark rock—dark though flushed with scarlet lichen, casting their quiet shadows across its restless radiance, the fountain underneath them filling its marble hollow with blue mist and fitful sound; and over all, the multitudinous bars of amber and rose, the sacred clouds that have no darkness, and only exist to illumine, were seen in fathomless intervals between the solemn and orbed repose of the stone pines, passing to lose themselves in the last, white, blinding lustre of the measureless line where the Campagna melted into the blaze of the sea.

II

Perhaps there is no more impressive scene on earth than the solitary extent of the Campagna of Rome under evening light. Let the reader imagine himself for a moment withdrawn from the sounds and motion of the living world, and sent forth alone into this wild and wasted plain. The earth yields and crumbles beneath his foot, tread he never so lightly, for its substance is white, hollow, and carious, like the dusty wreck of the bones of men. The long knotted grass waves and tosses feebly in the evening wind, and the shadows of its motion shake feverishly along the banks of ruin that lift themselves to the sunlight. Hillocks of mouldering earth heave around him, as if the dead beneath were struggling in their sleep; scattered blocks of black stone, four-square, remnants of mighty edifices, not one left upon another, lie upon them to keep them down. A dull purple poisonous haze stretches level along the desert, veiling its spectral wrecks of massy ruins, on whose rents the red light rests, like a dying fire on defiled altars. The blue ridge of the Alban Mount lifts itself against a solemn space of green, clear, quiet sky. Watch-towers of dark clouds stand steadfastly along the promontories of the Apennines. From the plain to the mountains, the shattered aqueducts, pier beyond pier, melt into the darkness, like shadowy and countless troops of funeral mourners, passing from a nation's grave.



SCENE IN THE CAMPAGNA

Turner

WALT WHITMAN

WALT WHITMAN (1819-92) was born in Long Island, New York, and lived a restless, wandering life in his youth and early manhood. He tried to express in poetry the bustling, crowded life of the New World, and the form of some of his writings is something like the prose-poetry that we find in certain parts of the English Bible. His verses are collected under the general title *Leaves of Grass*. In 1861, the war between North and South broke out in the United States. Whitman went to the front in order to nurse the wounded of the Northern forces and had much experience of the worst horrors of war. Sherman was one of the victorious generals on the northern or anti-slavery side. The following poem refers to the triumph of the North. Its regular rhymed verse is very unusual in Whitman.

ETHIOPIA SALUTING THE COLOURS

Who are you dusky woman, so ancient hardly human,
With your woolly-white and turban'd head, and bare bony feet?
Why rising by the roadside here, do you the colours greet?

('Tis while our army lines Carolina's sands and pines,
Forth from thy hovel door thou Ethiopia com'st to me,
As under doughty Sherman I march toward the sea.)

"Me master years a hundred since from my parents sunder'd,
A little child, they caught me as the savage beast is caught,
Then hither me across the sea the cruel slaver brought."

No further does she say, but lingering all the day,
Her high-borne turban'd head she wags, and rolls her darkling eye,
And courtesies to the regiments, the guidons moving by.

What is it fateful woman, so blear, hardly human?
Why wag your head with turban bound, yellow, red and green?
Are the things so strange and marvellous you see or have seen?

HORACE

HORACE—Quintus Horatius Flaccus—(65-8 B.C.), a Latin poet, wrote several books of Odes, Epistles and Satires in verse. The poem that follows is the ninth ode in the first book. Soracte is a mountain some little distance from Rome.

ODE

TRANSLATED BY C. S. CALVERLEY

One dazzling mass of solid snow
Soracte stands; the bent woods fret
Beneath their load; and, sharpest-set
With frost, the streams have ceased to flow.

Pile on great faggots and break up
The ice: let influence more benign
Enter with four-years-treasured wine,
Fetched in the ponderous Sabine cup:

Leave to the gods all else. When they
Have once bid rest the winds that war
Over the passionate seas, no more
Gray ash and cypress rock and sway.

Ask not what future suns shall bring:
Count to-day gain, whate'er it chance
To be: nor, young man, scorn the dance,
Nor deem sweet Love an idle thing,

Ere Time thy April youth had changed
To sourness. Park and public walk
Attract thee now, and whispered talk
At twilight meetings pre-arranged;

Hear now the pretty laugh that tells
In what dim corner lurks thy love;
And snatch a bracelet or a glove
From wrist or hand that scarce rebels.

ROBERT HERRICK

ROBERT HERRICK (1591-1634) was born in London and educated at Cambridge. His collection of poems called *Hesperides* and *Noble Numbers* contains some of the loveliest short lyrics in our language.

TO THE VIRGINS, TO MAKE MUCH OF TIME

Gather ye Rose-buds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying:
And this same flower that smiles to-day,
To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious Lamp of Heaven, the Sun,
The higher he 's a-getting;
The sooner will his Race be run,
And nearer he 's to Setting.

That Age is best, which is the first,
When Youth and Blood are warmer;
But being spent, the worse, and worst
Times, still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time;
And while ye may, go marry:
For having lost but once your prime,
You may for ever tarry.

TO DAFFODILS

Fair Daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon:
As yet the early-rising Sun
Has not attain'd his Noon.
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the Even-song;
And, having pray'd together, we
Will go with you along.

ROBERT HERRICK

We have short time to stay, as you,
We have as short a Spring;
As quick a growth to meet Decay,
As you, or any thing.
We die,
As your hours do, and dry
Away,
Like to the Summer's rain;
Or as the pearls of Morning's dew
Ne'er to be found again.

TO BLOSSOMS

Fair pledges of a fruitful Tree,
Why do ye fall so fast?
Your date is not so past;
But you may stay yet here a while,
To blush and gently smile;
And go at last.

What, were ye born to be
An hour or half's delight;
And so to bid good-night?
'Twas pity Nature brought ye forth
Merely to show your worth,
And lose you quite.

But you are lovely Leaves, where we
May read how soon things have
Their end, though ne'er so brave:
And after they have shown their pride
Like you a while: They glide
Into the Grave.

THE ENGLISH BIBLE

ECCLESIASTES, CHAP. 12

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; while the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain: in the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease, because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened: and the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of musick shall be brought low. Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the Almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets: or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

ISAIAH, CHAP. 52

Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion, put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion. For thus saith the LORD, Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money. For thus saith the Lord God, My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. Now therefore, what have I here, saith the LORD, that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them make them to howl, saith the LORD; and my Name continually every day is blasphemed. Therefore my people shall know my Name; therefore they shall know in that day that I am he that doth speak: Behold, it is I.

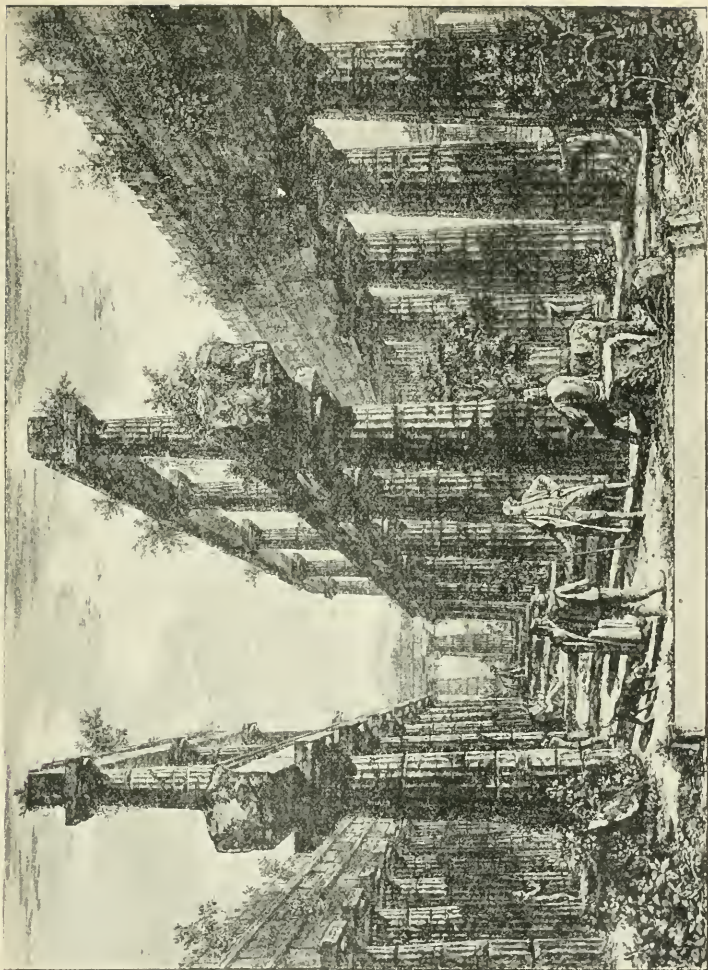
How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice, with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion.

Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

SHAKESPEARE

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564-1616), the greatest of English writers, was born at Stratford-on-Avon, the son of a trader in a large way of business and with some claims to gentility of family. The boy was educated at the grammar school of his native town. He came to London when he was about twenty-two; he was soon favourably known as an actor, and still more as a playwright. He re-wrote old pieces and made new ones out of old stories and chronicles. His known works number nearly forty. The first collection was made seven years after his death in a large volume (the "First Folio") prefaced by verses from the hands of men who had known him. Chief among these was his fellow-dramatist Ben Jonson. Shakespeare is equally great as a master of language, as a creator of characters and as a writer of plays for the stage. Phrases from his works have become part of our daily speech, and the persons in his plays seem as real to us as if we had known them. Shakespeare died in his native town and was buried in the chancel of the parish church. In addition to his plays Shakespeare wrote some poems. Three of his sonnets follow.

When I have seen by Time's fell hand defaced
The rich proud cost of out-worn buried age;
When sometime lofty towers I see down-razed
And brass eternal slave to mortal rage;
When I have seen the hungry ocean gain
Advantage on the kingdom of the shore,
And the firm soil win of the watery main,
Increasing store with loss and loss with store;



PAESTUM
Piranesi

When I have seen such interchange of state,
Or state itself confounded to decay;
Ruin hath taught me thus to ruminatè,
That Time will come and take my love away.
 This thought is as a death, which cannot choose
 But weep to have that which it fears to lose.

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest:
 So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
 So long lives this and this gives life to thee.

Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,
So do our minutes hasten to their end;
Each changing place with that which goes before,
In sequent toil all forwards do contend.
Nativity, once in the main of light,
Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crown'd,
Crook'd eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,
And Time that gave doth now his gift confound.
Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth
And delves the parallels in beauty's brow,
Feeds on the rarities of nature's truth,
And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow:
 And yet, to times in hope my verse shall stand,
 Praising Thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

MARK TWAIN

SAMUEL LANGHORNE CLEMENS (1835-1910) was born at Florida, Missouri. During his early manhood he worked as a pilot on the Mississippi river, and when he began to write took his pen-name, "Mark Twain," from a pilot's call. He became a journalist and gained much reputation for his humorous lectures and conversation. His first important book, *The Innocents Abroad*, records his adventures on a journey to Europe and the east. A later journey provided material for the much finer book, *A Tramp Abroad*. These two volumes, together with two stories, *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*, are his most deservedly famous books. His best work ranks very high as excellent writing, genuine humour, sound wisdom and sterling honesty. The passage that follows is taken from *A Tramp Abroad*. Gambetta (1838-82) was a famous French statesman. The duel with Fourtou, a political opponent, was actually fought in 1878—not quite as Mark Twain describes it, though certainly with as little damage to the combatants. Perhaps it is necessary to add that Mark Twain was not one of Gambetta's seconds.

THE GREAT FRENCH DUEL

Much as the modern French duel is ridiculed by certain smart people, it is in reality one of the most dangerous institutions of our day. Since it is always fought in the open air, the combatants are nearly sure to catch cold. M. Paul de Cassagnac, the most inveterate of the French duellists, has suffered so often in this way that he is at last a confirmed invalid; and the best physician in Paris has expressed the opinion that if he goes on duelling for fifteen or twenty years more—unless he forms the habit of fighting in a comfortable room where damps and draughts cannot intrude—he will eventually endanger his life. This ought to moderate the talk of those people who are so stubborn in maintaining that the French duel is the most health-giving of recreations because of the open-air exercise it affords. And it ought also to moderate that foolish talk about French duellists and socialist-hated monarchs being the only people who are immortal.

But it is time to get at my subject. As soon as I heard of the late fiery outbreak between M. Gambetta and M. Fourtou in the French Assembly, I knew that trouble must follow. I knew it because a long personal friendship with M. Gambetta had revealed to me the desperate and implacable nature of the man. Vast as

are his physical proportions, I knew that the thirst for revenge would penetrate to the remotest frontiers of his person.

I did not wait for him to call on me, but went at once to him. As I expected, I found the brave fellow steeped in a profound French calm. I say French calm, because French calmness and English calmness have points of difference. He was moving swiftly back and forth among the *débris* of his furniture, now and then staving chance fragments of it across the room with his foot; grinding a constant grist of curses through his set teeth; and halting every little while to deposit another handful of his hair on the pile which he had been building of it on the table.

He threw his arms around my neck, bent me over his stomach to his breast, kissed me on both cheeks, hugged me four or five times, and then placed me in his own arm-chair. As soon as I had got well again, we began business at once.

I said I supposed he would wish me to act as his second, and he said, "Of course." I said I must be allowed to act under a French name, so that I might be shielded from obloquy in my country, in case of fatal results. He winced here, probably at the suggestion that duelling was not regarded with respect in America. However, he agreed to my requirement. This accounts for the fact that in all the newspaper reports M. Gambetta's second was apparently a Frenchman.

First, we drew up my principal's will. I insisted upon this, and stuck to my point. I said I had never heard of a man in his right mind going out to fight a duel without first making his will. He said he had never heard of a man in his right mind doing anything of the kind. When he had finished the will, he wished to proceed to a choice of his "last words." He wanted to know how the following words, as a dying exclamation, struck me:—

"I die for my God, for my country, for freedom of speech, for progress, and the universal brotherhood of man!"

I objected that this would require too lingering a death; it was a good speech for a consumptive, but not suited to the exigencies of the field of honour. We wrangled over a good many ante-mortem outbursts, but I finally got him to cut his obituary down to this, which he copied into his memorandum book, purposing to get it by heart:—

"I DIE THAT FRANCE MAY LIVE."

I said that this remark seemed to lack relevancy; but he said relevancy was a matter of no consequence in last words—what you wanted was thrill.

The next thing in order was the choice of weapons. My principal said he was not feeling well, and would leave that and the other details of the proposed meeting to me. Therefore I wrote the following note and carried it to M. Fourtou's friend:—

"SIR,—M. Gambetta accepts M. Fourtou's challenge, and authorises me to propose Plessis-Piquet as the place of meeting; to-morrow morning at daybreak as the time; and axes as the weapons. I am, sir, with great respect,

"MARK TWAIN."

M. Fourtou's friend read this note, and shuddered. Then he turned to me, and said, with a suggestion of severity in his tone—

"Have you considered, sir, what would be the inevitable result of such a meeting as this?"

"Well, for instance, what *would* it be?"

"Bloodshed!"

"That's about the size of it," I said. "Now, if it is a fair question, what was your side proposing to shed?"

I had him there. He saw he had made a blunder, so he hastened to explain it away. He said he had spoken jestingly. Then he added that he and his principal would enjoy axes, and indeed prefer them, but such weapons were barred by the French code, and so I must change my proposal.

I walked the floor, turning the thing over in my mind, and finally it occurred to me that Gatling guns at fifteen paces would be a likely way to get a verdict on the field of honour. So I framed this idea into a proposition.

But it was not accepted. The code was in the way again. I proposed rifles; then double-barrelled shot-guns; then Colt's navy revolvers. These being all rejected, I reflected a while, and sarcastically suggested brick-bats at three-quarters of a mile. I always hate to fool away a humorous thing on a person who has no perception of humour; and it filled me with bitterness when this man went soberly away to submit the last proposition to his principal.

He came back presently and said his principal was charmed with the idea of brick-bats at three-quarters of a mile, but must decline on account of the danger to disinterested parties passing between. Then I said—

“Well, I am at the end of my string now. Perhaps *you* would be good enough to suggest a weapon? Perhaps you have even had one in your mind all the time?”

His countenance brightened, and he said with alacrity—

“Oh, without doubt, monsieur!”

So he fell to hunting in his pockets—pocket after pocket, and he had plenty of them—muttering all the while, “Now, what could I have done with them?”

At last he was successful. He fished out of his vest pocket a couple of little things which I carried to the light and ascertained to be pistols. They were single-barrelled and silver-mounted, and very dainty and pretty. I was not able to speak for emotion. I silently hung one of them on my watch-chain, and returned the other. My companion in crime now unrolled a postage-stamp containing several cartridges, and gave me one of them. I asked if he meant to signify by this that our men were to be allowed but one shot apiece. He replied that the French code permitted no more. I then begged him to go on and suggest a distance, for my mind was growing weak and confused under the strain which had been put upon it. He named sixty-five yards. I nearly lost my patience. I said—

“Sixty-five yards, with these instruments? Squirt-guns would be deadlier at fifty. Consider, my friend, you and I are banded together to destroy life, not make it eternal.”

But with all my persuasions, all my arguments, I was only able to get him to reduce the distance to thirty-five yards; and even this concession he made with reluctance, and said with a sigh—

“I wash my hands of this slaughter; on your head be it.”

There was nothing for me but to go home to my old lion-heart and tell my humiliating story. When I entered, M. Gambetta was laying his last lock of hair upon the altar. He sprang towards me, exclaiming—

“You have made the fatal arrangements—I see it in your eye!”

“I have.”

His face paled a trifle, and he leaned upon the table for support. He breathed thick and heavily for a moment or two, so tumultuous were his feelings; then he hoarsely whispered—

“The weapon, the weapon! Quick! what is the weapon?”

“This!” and I displayed that silver-mounted thing. He cast but one glance at it, then swooned ponderously to the floor.

When he came to, he said mournfully—

“The unnatural calm to which I have subjected myself has told upon my nerves. But away with weakness! I will confront my fate like a man and a Frenchman.”

He rose to his feet, and assumed an attitude which for sublimity has never been approached by man, and has seldom been surpassed by statues. Then he said, in his deep bass tones—

“Behold, I am calm, I am ready, reveal to me the distance.”

“Thirty-five yards.”...

I could not lift him up, of course; but I rolled him over, and poured water down his back. He presently came to, and said—

“Thirty-five yards—without a rest? But why ask? Since murder was that man’s intention, why should he palter with small details? But mark you one thing: in my fall the world shall see how the chivalry of France meets death.”

After a long silence he asked—

“Was nothing said about that man’s family standing up with him, as an offset to my bulk? But no matter; I would not stoop to make such a suggestion; if he is not noble enough to suggest it himself, he is welcome to this advantage, which no honourable man would take.”

He now sank into a sort of stupor of reflection, which lasted some minutes; after which he broke silence with—

“The hour—what is the hour fixed for the collision?”

“Dawn, to-morrow.”

He seemed greatly surprised, and immediately said—

“Insanity! I never heard of such a thing. Nobody is abroad at such an hour.”

“That is the reason I named it. Do you mean to say you want an audience?”

“It is no time to bandy words. I am astonished that M. Fourtou should ever have agreed to so strange an innovation. Go at once and require a later hour.”

I ran downstairs, threw open the front door, and almost plunged into the arms of M. Fourtou's second. He said—

"I have the honour to say that my principal strenuously objects to the hour chosen, and begs you will consent to change it to half-past nine."

"Any courtesy, sir, which it is in our power to extend is at the service of your excellent principal. We agree to the proposed change of time."

"I beg you to accept the thanks of my client." Then he turned to a person behind him, and said, "You hear, M. Noir, the hour is altered to half-past nine." Whereupon M. Noir bowed, expressed his thanks, and went away. My accomplice continued—

"If agreeable to you, your chief surgeons and ours shall proceed to the field in the same carriage, as is customary."

"It is entirely agreeable to me, and I am obliged to you for mentioning the surgeons, for I am afraid I should not have thought of them. How many shall I want? I suppose two or three will be enough."

"Two is the customary number for each party. I refer to 'chief' surgeons; but considering the exalted positions occupied by our clients, it will be well and decorous that each of us appoint several consulting surgeons, from among the highest in the profession. These will come in their own private carriages. Have you engaged a hearse?"

"Bless my stupidity, I never thought of it! I will attend to it right away. I must seem very ignorant to you; but you must try to overlook that, because I have never had any experience of such a swell duel as this before. I have had a good deal to do with duels on the Pacific coast, but I see now that they were crude affairs. A hearse—sho! we used to leave the elected lying around loose, and let anybody cord them up and cart them off that wanted to. Have you anything further to suggest?"

"Nothing, except that the head undertakers shall ride together, as is usual. The subordinates and mutes will go on foot, as is also usual. I will see you at eight o'clock in the morning, and we will then arrange the order of the procession. I have the honour to bid you a good day."

I returned to my client, who said, "Very well; at what hour is the engagement to begin?"

"Half-past nine."

"Very good indeed. Have you sent the fact to the newspapers?"

"*Sir!* If after our long and intimate friendship you can for a moment deem me capable of so base a treachery——"

"Tut, tut! What words are these, my dear friend? Have I wounded you? Ah, forgive me; I am overloading you with labour. Therefore go on with the other details, and drop this one from your list. The bloody-minded Fourtou will be sure to attend to it. Or I myself—yes, to make certain, I will drop a note to my journalistic friend, M. Noir."

"Oh, come to think, you may save yourself the trouble; that other second has informed M. Noir."

"H'm! I might have known it. It is just like that Fourtou, who always wants to make a display."

At half-past nine in the morning the procession approached the field of Plessis-Piquet in the following order: first came our carriage—nobody in it but M. Gambetta and myself; then a carriage containing M. Fourtou and his second; then a carriage containing two poet-orators who did not believe in God, and these had MS. funeral orations projecting from their breast-pockets; then a carriage containing the head surgeons and their cases of instruments; then eight private carriages containing consulting surgeons; then a hack containing a coroner; then the two hearses; then a carriage containing the head undertakers; then a train of assistants and mutes on foot; and after these came plodding through the fog a long procession of camp followers, police, and citizens generally. It was a noble turn-out, and would have made a fine display if we had had thinner weather.

There was no conversation. I spoke several times to my principal, but I judge he was not aware of it, for he always referred to his note-book and muttered absently, "I die that France may live."

Arrived on the field, my fellow-second and I paced off the thirty-five yards, and then drew lots for choice of position. This latter was but an ornamental ceremony, for all choices were alike in such weather. These preliminaries being ended, I went to my principal and asked him if he was ready. He spread himself out to his full width, and said in a stern voice, "Ready! Let the batteries be charged."

The loading was done in the presence of duly constituted witnesses. We considered it best to perform this delicate service with the assistance of a lantern, on account of the state of the weather. We now placed our men.

At this point the police noticed that the public had massed themselves together on the right and left of the field; they therefore begged a delay, while they should put these poor people in a place of safety. The request was granted.

The police having ordered the two multitudes to take positions behind the duellists, we were once more ready. The weather growing still more opaque, it was agreed between myself and the other second that before giving the fatal signal we should each deliver a loud whoop to enable the combatants to ascertain each other's whereabouts.

I now returned to my principal, and was distressed to observe that he had lost a good deal of his spirit. I tried my best to hearten him. I said, "Indeed, Sir, things are not as bad as they seem. Considering the character of the weapons, the limited number of shots allowed, the generous distance, the impenetrable solidity of the fog, and the added fact that one of the combatants is one-eyed and the other cross-eyed and near-sighted, it seems to me that this conflict need not necessarily be fatal. There are chances that both of you may survive. Therefore cheer up; do not be down-hearted."

This speech had so good an effect that my principal immediately stretched forth his hand and said, "I am myself again; give me the weapon."

I laid it, all lonely and forlorn, in the centre of the vast solitude of his palm. He gazed at it and shuddered. And still mournfully contemplating it, he murmured, in a broken voice—

"Alas! it is not death I dread, but mutilation."

I heartened him once more, and with such success that he presently said, "Let the tragedy begin. Stand at my back; do not desert me in this solemn hour, my friend."

I gave him my promise. I now assisted him to point his pistol towards the spot where I judged his adversary to be standing, and cautioned him to listen well and further guide himself by my fellow-second's whoop. Then I propped myself against M. Gambetta's back, and raised a rousing "Whoop-ee!" This was

answered from out the far distances of the fog, and I immediately shouted---

"One—two—three—*fire!*"

Two little sounds like *spit! spit!* broke upon my ear, and in the same instant I was crushed to the earth under a mountain of flesh. Bruised as I was, I was still able to catch a faint accent from above, to this effect—

"I die for...for...perdition take it, what *is* it I die for?... oh yes—FRANCE! I die that France may live!"

The surgeons swarmed around with their probes in their hands, and applied their microscopes to the whole area of M. Gambetta's person, with the happy result of finding nothing in the nature of a wound. Then a scene ensued which was in every way gratifying and inspiring.

The two gladiators fell upon each other's necks, with floods of proud and happy tears; that other second embraced me; the surgeons, the orators, the undertakers, the police, everybody embraced, everybody congratulated, everybody cried, and the whole atmosphere was filled with praise and with joy unspeakable.

It seemed to me then that I would rather be a hero of a French duel than a crowned and sceptred monarch.

When the commotion had somewhat subsided, the body of surgeons held a consultation, and after a good deal of debate decided that with proper care and nursing there was reason to believe that I should survive my injuries. My internal hurts were deemed the most serious, since it was apparent that a broken rib had penetrated my left lung, and that many of my organs had been pressed out so far to one side or the other of where they belonged, that it was doubtful if they would ever learn to perform their functions in such remote and unaccustomed localities. They then set my arm in two places, pulled my right hip into its socket again, and re-elevated my nose. I was an object of great interest, and even admiration; and many sincere and warm-hearted persons had themselves introduced to me, and said they were proud to know the only man who had been hurt in a French duel in forty years.

I was placed in an ambulance at the very head of the procession; and thus with gratifying *éclat* I was marched into Paris, the most

conspicuous figure in that great spectacle, and deposited at the hospital.

The Cross of the Legion of Honour has been conferred upon me. However, few escape that distinction.

Such is the true version of the most memorable private conflict of the age.

I have no complaints to make against any one. I acted for myself, and I can stand the consequences. Without boasting, I think I may say I am not afraid to stand before a modern French duellist, but as long as I keep in my right mind I will never consent to stand behind one again.

C. S. CALVERLEY

CHARLES STUART CALVERLEY (1831-84) was the son of the Rev. Henry Blayds, who assumed the name Calverley when Charles was twenty-one. He was educated at Harrow, and after going to Oxford, migrated to Cambridge. He is doubly famous, first as a humorist and parodist, and next as a translator.

STRIKING

It was a railway passenger,
And he lept out jauntilie.

“Now up and bear, thou stout portér,
My two chattéls to me.

“Bring hither, bring hither my bag so red,
And portmanteau so brown:

(They lie in the van, for a trusty man
He labelled them London town:)

“And fetch me eke a cabman bold,
That I may be his fare, his fare;
And he shall have a good shilling,
If by two of the clock he do me bring
To the Terminus, Euston Square.”

“Now,—so to thee the saints alway,
Good gentleman, give luck,—
As never a cab may I find this day,
For the cabman wights have struck:

And now, I wis, at the Red Post Inn,
 Or else at the Dog and Duck,
 Or at Unicorn Blue, or at Green Griffin,
 The nut-brown ale and the fine old gin
 Right pleasantly they do suck."

"Now rede me aright, thou stout portér,
 What were it best that I should do:
 For woe is me, an' I reach not there
 Or ever the clock strike two."

"I have a son, a lytel son;
 Fleet is his foot as the wild roebuck's:
 Give him a shilling, and eke a brown,
 And he shall carry thy fardels down
 To Euston, or half over London town,
 On one of the station trucks."

Then forth in a hurry did they twain fare,
 The gent, and the son of the stout portér,
 Who fled like an arrow, nor turned a hair,
 Through all the mire and muck:
 "A ticket, a ticket, sir clerk, I pray:
 For by two of the clock must I needs away."
 "That may hardly be," the clerk did say,
 "For indeed—the clocks have struck."

ADDISON

JOSEPH ADDISON (1672-1719), the son of a Wiltshire clergyman, was educated at Charterhouse and Oxford. He wrote many poems, notably *The Campaign*, which celebrates the victory at Blenheim. He is specially admired for the pleasant, good-humoured and charming essays written—some of them in association with Richard Steele—for two famous periodicals, *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*. Of these essays those which deal with the life of an imaginary country gentleman Sir Roger de Coverley are perhaps the most popular. Addison was active in political life and held several important offices. Thackeray's novel *Esmond* includes Addison and Steele among its characters. The passage that follows is one of the *Spectator* essays, No. 26, Friday, 30 March, 1711.

MEDITATIONS IN THE ABBEY

Pallida mors æquo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas

Regumque turres. O beate Sexti,

Vitæ summa brevis spem nos vetat inchoare longam.

Jam te premet nox, fabulæque manes,

Et domus exilis Plutonia.

HOR. *Od.* 1. iv. 13.

With equal foot, rich friend, impartial Fate

Knocks at the cottage and the palace gate:

Life's span forbids thee to extend thy cares,

And stretch thy hopes beyond thy years:

Night soon will seize, and you must quickly go

To storied ghosts, and Pluto's house below.

CREECH.

When I am in a serious humour, I very often walk by myself in Westminster Abbey; where the gloominess of the place, and the use to which it is applied, with the solemnity of the building, and the condition of the people who lie in it, are apt to fill the mind with a kind of melancholy, or rather thoughtfulness, that is not disagreeable. I yesterday passed a whole afternoon in the church-yard, the cloisters, and the church, amusing myself with the tombstones and inscriptions that I met with in those several regions of the dead. Most of them recorded nothing else of the buried person, but that he was born upon one day, and died upon another: the whole history of his life being comprehended in those two circumstances that are common to all mankind. I could not but look upon these registers of existence, whether of brass or marble, as a kind of satire upon the departed persons; who had left no other memorial of them, but that they were born and that they died. They put me in mind of several persons mentioned in the battles of heroic poems, who have sounding names given them, for no other reason but that they may be killed, and are celebrated for nothing but being knocked on the head.

Γλαῦκόν τε Μέδοντά τε Θερσίλοχόν τε.

HOM.

Glaucumque, Medontaque, Thersilochumque.

VIRG.

The life of these men is finely described in holy writ by "the path of an arrow," which is immediately closed up and lost.

Upon my going into the church, I entertained myself with the digging of a grave; and saw in every shovel-full of it that was

thrown up, the fragment of a bone or skull intermixed with a kind of fresh mouldering earth that some time or other had a place in the composition of a human body. Upon this I began to consider with myself what innumerable multitudes of people lay confused together under the pavement of that ancient cathedral; how men and women, friends and enemies, priests and soldiers, monks and prebendaries, were crumbled amongst one another, and blended together in the same common mass; how beauty, strength, and youth, with old age, weakness, and deformity, lay undistinguished, in the same promiscuous heap of matter.

After having thus surveyed this great magazine of mortality, as it were in the lump, I examined it more particularly by the accounts which I found on several of the monuments which are raised in every quarter of that ancient fabric. Some of them were covered with such extravagant epitaphs, that, if it were possible for the dead person to be acquainted with them, he would blush at the praises which his friends have bestowed upon him. There are others so excessively modest, that they deliver the character of the person departed in Greek or Hebrew, and by that means are not understood once in a twelvemonth. In the poetical quarter, I found there were poets who had no monuments, and monuments which had no poets. I observed indeed that the present war had filled the church with many of these uninhabited monuments, which had been erected to the memory of persons whose bodies were perhaps buried in the plains of Blenheim, or in the bosom of the ocean.

I could not but be very much delighted with several modern epitaphs, which are written with great elegance of expression and justness of thought, and therefore do honour to the living as well as to the dead. As a foreigner is very apt to conceive an idea of the ignorance or politeness of a nation from the turn of their public monuments and inscriptions, they should be submitted to the perusal of men of learning and genius before they are put in execution. Sir Cloudesley Shovel's monument has very often given me great offence. Instead of the brave rough English admiral, which was the distinguishing character of that plain gallant man, he is represented on his tomb by the figure of a beau, dressed in a long periwig, and reposing himself upon velvet cushions under a canopy of state. The inscription is answerable

to the monument; for instead of celebrating the many remarkable actions he had performed in the service of his country, it acquaints us only with the manner of his death, in which it was impossible for him to reap any honour. The Dutch, whom we are apt to despise for want of genius, show an infinitely greater taste of antiquity and politeness in their buildings and works of this nature, than what we meet with in those of our own country. The monuments of their admirals, which have been erected at the public expense, represent them like themselves, and are adorned with rostral crowns and naval ornaments, with beautiful festoons of sea-weed, shells, and coral.

But to return to our subject. I have left the repository of our English kings for the contemplation of another day, when I shall find my mind disposed for so serious an amusement. I know that entertainments of this nature are apt to raise dark and dismal thoughts in timorous minds, and gloomy imaginations; but for my own part, though I am always serious, I do not know what it is to be melancholy; and can therefore take a view of nature in her deep and solemn scenes, with the same pleasure as in her most gay and delightful ones. By this means I can improve myself with those objects which others consider with terror. When I look upon the tombs of the great, every emotion of envy dies in me; when I read the epitaphs of the beautiful, every inordinate desire goes out; when I meet with the grief of parents upon a tomb-stone, my heart melts with compassion; when I see the tomb of the parents themselves, I consider the vanity of grieving for those whom we must quickly follow; when I see kings lying by those who deposed them, when I consider rival wits placed side by side, or the holy men that divided the world with their contests and disputes, I reflect with sorrow and astonishment on the little competitions, factions, and debates of mankind. When I read the several dates of the tombs, of some that died yesterday, and some six hundred years ago, I consider that great day when we shall all of us be contemporaries, and make our appearance together.

BEAUMONT

FRANCIS BEAUMONT (1584-1616) wrote, with John Fletcher, a large number of plays, of which *The Maid's Tragedy* and *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* may be specially named.

ON THE TOMBS IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY

Mortality, behold and fear
What a change of flesh is here!
Think how many royal bones
Sleep within this heap of stones;
Here they lie, had realms and lands,
Who now want strength to stir their hands,
Where from their pulpits seal'd with dust
They preach, "In greatness is no trust."
Here's an acre sown indeed
With the richest royallest seed
That the earth did e'er suck in
Since the first man died for sin:
Here the bones of birth have cried
"Though gods they were, as men they died!"
Here are sands, ignoble things,
Dropt from the ruin'd sides of kings
Here's a world of pomp and state
Buried in dust, once dead by fate.

SHIRLEY

JAMES SHIRLEY (1596-1666) wrote many plays. The following lyrical funeral chant forms the close of his short drama called *The Contention of Ajax and Ulysses for the armour of Achilles*.

The glories of our blood and state
Are shadows, not substantial things;
There is no armour against fate;
Death lays his icy hand on kings;
Sceptre and Crown
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

Some men with swords may reap the field,
And plant fresh laurels where they kill;
But their strong nerves at last must yield;
They tame but one another still:

Early or late
They stoop to fate,
And must give up their murmuring breath
When they, pale captives, creep to death.

The garlands wither on your brow;
Then boast no more your mighty deeds;
Upon Death's purple altar now
See where the victor-victim bleeds:
Your heads must come
To the cold tomb;
Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet, and blossom in their dust.

GIBBON

EDWARD GIBBON (1737-94), the great historian, was born at Putney and educated at Westminster and Oxford. He was undistinguished as a student in both places. He became a Roman Catholic, and his father sent him to Switzerland where he was re-converted to protestantism. He became sufficiently familiar with the French language to write and publish two slight works in that tongue, and he began a course of steady, solid reading in ancient literature as preparation for a great historical work which he felt he could write though not sure of the subject. In the course of travels in Italy he resolved that his great subject should be a history of the decline and fall of Rome. He prepared steadily for this task and wrote his book with such skill of narrative and command of material that *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* remains unchallenged as the greatest history in our language. Gibbon wrote some sketches of his own life, from which the second of the following selections has been taken.

The emperor Julian (331-363) is known as "The Apostate" because he abandoned Christianity and tried to re-establish the ancient religion of the Greeks. He led a simple, studious life, distinguished himself by his personal courage and was killed in a war against the Persians.

The greater part of the following passage is taken from chapter 24 of *The Decline and Fall*; the last paragraph is the conclusion of chapter 22.

DEATH AND CHARACTER OF THE EMPEROR JULIAN

As long as the Romans seemed to advance into the country, their march was observed and insulted from a distance by several

bodies of Persian cavalry; who, showing themselves sometimes in loose, and sometimes in closer, order, faintly skirmished with the advanced guards. These detachments were, however, supported by a much greater force; and the heads of the columns were no sooner pointed towards the Tigris than a cloud of dust arose on the plain. The Romans, who now aspired only to the permission of a safe and speedy retreat, endeavoured to persuade themselves that this formidable appearance was occasioned by a troop of wild asses, or perhaps by the approach of some friendly Arabs. They halted, pitched their tents, fortified their camp, passed the whole night in continual alarms; and discovered, at the dawn of day, that they were surrounded by an army of Persians. This army, which might be considered only as the van of the Barbarians, was soon followed by the main body of cuirassiers, archers, and elephants, commanded by Meranes, a general of rank and reputation. He was accompanied by two of the king's sons, and many of the principal satraps; and fame and expectation exaggerated the strength of the remaining powers, which slowly advanced under the conduct of Sapor himself. As the Romans continued their march, their long array, which was forced to bend, or divide, according to the varieties of the ground, afforded frequent and favourable opportunities to their vigilant enemies. The Persians repeatedly charged with fury; they were repeatedly repulsed with firmness; and the action at Maronga, which almost deserved the name of a battle, was marked by a considerable loss of satraps and elephants, perhaps of equal value in the eyes of their monarch. These splendid advantages were not obtained without an adequate slaughter on the side of the Romans: several officers of distinction were either killed or wounded; and the emperor himself, who, on all occasions of danger, inspired and guided the valour of his troops, was obliged to expose his person and exert his abilities. The weight of offensive and defensive arms, which still constituted the strength and safety of the Romans, disabled them from making any long or effectual pursuit; and, as the horsemen of the East were trained to dart their javelins, and shoot their arrows, at full speed, and in every possible direction, the cavalry of Persia was never more formidable than in the moment of a rapid and disorderly flight. But the most certain and irreparable loss of the Romans was that of time. The hardy veterans, accustomed to

the cold climate of Gaul and Germany, fainted under the sultry heat of an Assyrian summer: their vigour was exhausted by the incessant repetition of march and combat; and the progress of the army was suspended by the precautions of a slow and dangerous retreat in the presence of an active enemy. Every day, every hour, as the supply diminished, the value and price of subsistence increased in the Roman camp. Julian, who always contented himself with such food as a hungry soldier would have disdained, distributed for the use of his troops the provisions of the imperial household, and whatever could be spared from the sumpter-horses of the tribunes and generals. But this feeble relief served only to aggravate the sense of the public distress; and the Romans began to entertain the most gloomy apprehensions that, before they could reach the frontiers of the empire, they should all perish, either by famine or by the sword of the Barbarians.

While Julian struggled with the almost insuperable difficulties of his situation, the silent hours of the night were still devoted to study and contemplation. Whenever he closed his eyes in short and interrupted slumbers, his mind was agitated with painful anxiety; nor can it be thought surprising that the Genius of the empire should once more appear before him, covering with a funeral veil his head and his horn of abundance, and slowly retiring from the Imperial tent. The monarch started from his couch, and stepping forth, to refresh his wearied spirits with the coolness of the midnight air, he beheld a fiery meteor, which shot athwart the sky, and suddenly vanished. Julian was convinced that he had seen the menacing countenance of the god of war; the council which he summoned, of Tuscan haruspices, unanimously pronounced that he should abstain from action: but, on this occasion, necessity and reason were more prevalent than superstition; and the trumpets sounded at the break of day. The army marched through a hilly country; and the hills had been secretly occupied by the Persians. Julian led the van, with the skill and attention of a consummate general; he was alarmed by the intelligence that his rear was suddenly attacked. The heat of the weather had tempted him to lay aside his cuirass; but he snatched a shield from one of his attendants, and hastened, with a sufficient reinforcement, to the relief of the rear-guard. A similar danger recalled the intrepid prince to the defence of the front; and, as he galloped

between the columns, the centre of the left was attacked, and almost overpowered, by a furious charge of the Persian cavalry and elephants. This huge body was soon defeated, by the well-timed evolution of the light infantry, who aimed their weapons, with dexterity and effect, against the backs of the horsemen and the legs of the elephants. The Barbarians fled; and Julian, who was foremost in every danger, animated the pursuit with his voice and gestures. His trembling guards, scattered and oppressed by the disorderly throng of friends and enemies, reminded their fearless sovereign that he was without armour; and conjured him to decline the fall of the impending ruin. As they exclaimed, a cloud of darts and arrows was discharged from the flying squadrons; and a javelin, after razing the skin of his arm, transpierced the ribs, and fixed in the inferior part of the liver. Julian attempted to draw the deadly weapon from his side; but his fingers were cut by the sharpness of the steel, and he fell senseless from his horse. His guards flew to his relief; and the wounded emperor was gently raised from the ground, and conveyed out of the tumult of the battle into an adjacent tent. The report of the melancholy event passed from rank to rank; but the grief of the Romans inspired them with invincible valour and the desire of revenge. The bloody and obstinate conflict was maintained by the two armies, till they were separated by the total darkness of the night. The Persians derived some honour from the advantage which they obtained against the left wing, where Anatolius, master of the offices, was slain, and the præfect Sallust very narrowly escaped. But the event of the day was adverse to the Barbarians. They abandoned the field, their two generals, Meranes and Nohordates, fifty nobles or satraps, and a multitude of their bravest soldiers: and the success of the Romans, if Julian had survived, might have been improved into a decisive and useful victory.

The first words that Julian uttered, after his recovery from the fainting fit into which he had been thrown by loss of blood, were expressive of his martial spirit. He called for his horse and arms, and was impatient to rush into the battle. His remaining strength was exhausted by the painful effort; and the surgeons who examined his wound discovered the symptoms of approaching death. He employed the awful moments with the firm temper of

a hero and a sage; the philosophers who had accompanied him in this fatal expedition compared the tent of Julian with the prison of Socrates; and the spectators, whom duty, or friendship, or curiosity, had assembled around his couch, listened with respectful grief to the funeral oration of their dying emperor. "Friends and fellow-soldiers, the seasonable period of my departure is now arrived, and I discharge, with the cheerfulness of a ready debtor, the demands of nature. I have learned from philosophy, how much the soul is more excellent than the body; and that the separation of the nobler substance should be the subject of joy, rather than of affliction. I have learned from religion, that an early death has often been the reward of piety; and I accept, as a favour of the gods, the mortal stroke that secures me from the danger of disgracing a character, which has hitherto been supported by virtue and fortitude. I die without remorse, as I have lived without guilt. I am pleased to reflect on the innocence of my private life; and I can affirm, with confidence, that the supreme authority, that emanation of the Divine Power, has been preserved in my hands pure and immaculate. Detesting the corrupt and destructive maxims of despotism, I have considered the happiness of the people as the end of government. Submitting my actions to the laws of prudence, of justice, and of moderation, I have trusted the event to the care of Providence. Peace was the object of my counsels, as long as peace was consistent with the public welfare; but, when the imperious voice of my country summoned me to arms, I exposed my person to the dangers of war, with the clear foreknowledge (which I had acquired from the art of divination) that I was destined to fall by the sword. I now offer my tribute of gratitude to the Eternal Being, who has not suffered me to perish by the cruelty of a tyrant, by the secret dagger of conspiracy, or by the slow tortures of lingering disease. He has given me, in the midst of an honourable career, a splendid and glorious departure from this world; and I hold it equally absurd, equally base, to solicit, or to decline, the stroke of fate.—Thus much I have attempted to say; but my strength fails me, and I feel the approach of death.—I shall cautiously refrain from any word that may tend to influence your suffrages in the election of an emperor. My choice might be imprudent, or injudicious; and, if it should not be ratified by the consent of the army, it might be

fatal to the person whom I should recommend. I shall only, as a good citizen, express my hopes that the Romans may be blessed with the government of a virtuous sovereign." After this discourse, which Julian pronounced in a firm and gentle tone of voice, he distributed, by a military testament, the remains of his private fortune; and, making some inquiry why Anatolius was not present, he understood, from the answer of Sallust, that Anatolius was killed; and bewailed, with amiable inconsistency, the loss of his friend. At the same time he reproved the immoderate grief of the spectators; and conjured them not to disgrace, by unmanly tears, the fate of a prince who in a few moments would be united with heaven, and with the stars. The spectators were silent; and Julian entered into a metaphysical argument with the philosophers Priscus and Maximus, on the nature of the soul. The efforts which he made, of mind as well as body, most probably hastened his death. His wound began to bleed with fresh violence; his respiration was embarrassed by the swelling of the veins: he called for a draught of cold water, and, as soon as he had drunk it, expired without pain, about the hour of midnight. Such was the end of that extraordinary man, in the thirty-second year of his age, after a reign of one year and about eight months from the death of Constantius. In his last moments he displayed, perhaps with some ostentation, the love of virtue and of fame which had been the ruling passions of his life.

The generality of princes, if they were stripped of their purple and cast naked into the world, would immediately sink to the lowest rank of society, without a hope of emerging from their obscurity. But the personal merit of Julian was, in some measure, independent of his fortune. Whatever had been his choice of life, by the force of intrepid courage, lively wit, and intense application, he would have obtained, or at least he would have deserved, the highest honours of his profession; and Julian might have raised himself to the rank of minister, or general, of the state in which he was born a private citizen. If the jealous caprice of power had disappointed his expectations; if he had prudently declined the paths of greatness, the employment of the same talents in studious solitude would have placed, beyond the reach of kings, his present happiness and his immortal fame. When we inspect, with minute

or perhaps malevolent attention, the portrait of Julian, something seems wanting to the grace and perfection of the whole figure. His genius was less powerful and sublime than that of Cæsar; nor did he possess the consummate prudence of Augustus. The virtues of Trajan appear more steady and natural, and the philosophy of Marcus is more simple and consistent. Yet Julian sustained adversity with firmness, and prosperity with moderation. After an interval of one hundred and twenty years from the death of Alexander Severus, the Romans beheld an emperor who made no distinction between his duties and his pleasures; who laboured to relieve the distress, and to revive the spirit, of his subjects; and who endeavoured always to connect authority with merit, and happiness with virtue. Even faction, and religious faction, was constrained to acknowledge the superiority of his genius, in peace as well as in war; and to confess, with a sigh, that the apostate Julian was a lover of his country, and that he deserved the empire of the world.

ON THE COMPOSITION OF HIS HISTORY

It was at Rome, on the 15th of October, 1764, as I sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, while the bare-footed friars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter, that the idea of writing the decline and fall of the city first started to my mind. But my original plan was circumscribed to the decay of the city rather than of the empire, and though my reading and reflections began to point towards that object, some years elapsed, and several avocations intervened, before I was seriously engaged in the execution of that laborious work....

No sooner was I settled in my house and library, than I undertook the composition of the first volume of my History. At the outset all was dark and doubtful; even the title of the work, the true æra of the Decline and Fall of the Empire, the limits of the introduction, the division of the chapters, and the order of the narrative; and I was often tempted to cast away the labour of seven years. The style of an author should be the image of his mind, but the choice and command of language is the fruit of exercise. Many experiments were made before I could hit the middle tone between a dull chronicle and a rhetorical declamation: three times did I compose the first chapter, and twice the second

and third, before I was tolerably satisfied with their effect. In the remainder of the way I advanced with a more equal and easy pace; but the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters have been reduced by three successive revisals, from a large volume to their present size; and they might still be compressed, without any loss of facts or sentiments. An opposite fault may be imputed to the concise and superficial narrative of the first reigns from Commodus to Alexander; a fault of which I have never heard, except from Mr Hume in his last journey to London. Such an oracle might have been consulted and obeyed with rational devotion; but I was soon disgusted with the modest practice of reading the manuscript to my friends. Of such friends some will praise from politeness, and some will criticise from vanity. The author himself is the best judge of his own performance; no one has so deeply meditated on the subject; no one is so sincerely interested in the event....

Nearly two years had elapsed between the publication of my first and the commencement of my second volume.... But when I resumed my task I felt my improvement; I was now master of my style and subject, and while the measure of my daily performance was enlarged, I discovered less reason to cancel or correct. It has always been my practice to cast a long paragraph in a single mould, to try it by my ear, to deposit it in my memory, but to suspend the action of the pen till I had given the last polish to my work. Shall I add, that I never found my mind more vigorous, nor my composition more happy, than in the winter hurry of society and parliament?...

It was not till after many designs, and many trials, that I preferred, as I still prefer, the method of grouping my picture by nations; and the seeming neglect of chronological order is surely compensated by the superior merits of interest and perspicuity. The style of the first volume is, in my opinion, somewhat crude and elaborate; in the second and third it is ripened into ease, correctness, and numbers; but in the three last I may have been seduced by the facility of my pen, and the constant habit of speaking one language and writing another may have infused some mixture of Gallic idioms. Happily for my eyes, I have always closed my studies with the day, and commonly with the morning; and a long, but temperate, labour has been accomplished, without

fatiguing either the mind or body; but when I computed the remainder of my time and my task, it was apparent that, according to the season of publication, the delay of a month would be productive of that of a year. I was now straining for the goal, and in the last winter many evenings were borrowed from the social pleasures of Lausanne. I could now wish that a pause, an interval, had been allowed for a serious revisal.

I have presumed to mark the moment of conception: I shall now commemorate the hour of my final deliverance. It was on the day, or rather night, of the 27th of June, 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page, in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a *berceau*, or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on the recovery of my freedom, and, perhaps, the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind, by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion, and that whatsoever might be the future date of my History, the life of the historian must be short and precarious. I will add two facts, which have seldom occurred in the composition of six, or at least of five quartos. 1. My first rough manuscript, without any intermediate copy, has been sent to the press. 2. Not a sheet has been seen by any human eyes, excepting those of the author and the printer; the faults and the merits are exclusively my own.

CHARLES DICKENS

CHARLES DICKENS (1812-70) was born at Landport (Portsmouth), the son of a clerk at the Dockyard. The family moved about a great deal, and after two residences in Chatham, settled in London when Charles was nine. The boy was early acquainted with trouble. His father's thriftless and unbusiness-like character is reproduced in Micawber (*David Copperfield*), and the boy's unhappy experiences, including employment when ten years old in a blacking factory, are used with great effect in the same novel. The father was arrested for debt and sent to the Marshalsea, a prison for debtors, described in *Little Dorrit*. Another debtor's prison, the Fleet, figures largely in

Pickwick. Like David Copperfield, Charles Dickens went to school again after he had been to work. Later, he taught himself shorthand in order to become a reporter. Dickens was able to turn all his experiences to good account. What he had himself suffered he utilised with great skill in his books. He began his literary career by writing short sketches at the age of twenty-one. At twenty-four he began *Pickwick*, and soon became a highly successful writer. His many books are so familiar that they need not be named. He led an active life. He travelled much, he gave readings from his books, he played a prominent part in the public life of his time, and he was able to hasten the end of many abuses. He died quite suddenly. His fame, great while he lived, has steadily increased, and he is now the most widely read of English writers. The passage that follows is taken from *Our Mutual Friend*, one of his later novels. Mr Boffin, a genial, noble-hearted fellow has just come very strangely into a fortune. He is quite uneducated, and a little puzzled by the change in his condition.

MR BOFFIN DECLINES AND FALLS

Over against a London house, a corner house not far from Cavendish Square, a man with a wooden leg had sat for some years, with his remaining foot in a basket in cold weather, picking up a living on this wise;—Every morning at eight o'clock, he stumped to the corner, carrying a chair, a clothes-horse, a pair of trestles, a board, a basket, and an umbrella, all strapped together. Separating these, the board and trestles became a counter, the basket supplied the few small lots of fruit and sweets that he offered for sale upon it and became a foot-warmer, the unfolded clothes-horse displayed a choice collection of halfpenny ballads and became a screen, and the stool planted within it became his post for the rest of the day. All weathers saw the man at the post. This is to be accepted in a double sense, for he contrived a back to his wooden stool by placing it against the lamp-post. When the weather was wet, he put up his umbrella over his stock-in-trade, not over himself; when the weather was dry, he furled that faded article, tied it round with a piece of yarn, and laid it cross-wise under the trestles: where it looked like an unwholesomely-forced lettuce that had lost in colour and crispness what it had gained in size.

He had established his right to the corner by imperceptible prescription. He had never varied his ground an inch, but had in the beginning diffidently taken the corner upon which the side of the house gave. A howling corner in the winter time, a dusty corner in the summer time, an undesirable corner at the best of

times. Shelterless fragments of straw and paper got up revolving storms there, when the main street was at peace; and the water-cart, as if it were drunk or short-sighted, came blundering and jolting round it, making it muddy when all else was clean.

On the front of his sale-board hung a little placard, like a kettle-holder, bearing the inscription in his own small text:

*Errands gone
On with fi
Delity By
Ladies and Gentlemen
I remain
Your humble Serv^t.
Silas Wegg.*

He had not only settled it with himself in the course of time, that he was errand-goer by appointment to the house at the corner (though he received such commissions not half-a-dozen times in a year, and then only as some servant's deputy), but also that he was one of the house's retainers and owed vassalage to it and was bound to leal and loyal interest in it. For this reason, he always spoke of it as "Our House," and, though his knowledge of its affairs was mostly speculative and all wrong, claimed to be in its confidence. On similar grounds he never beheld an inmate at any one of its windows but he touched his hat. Yet, he knew so little about the inmates that he gave them names of his own invention: as "Miss Elizabeth," "Master George," "Aunt Jane," "Uncle Parker"—having no authority whatever for any such designations, but particularly the last—to which, as a natural consequence, he stuck with great obstinacy.

Over the house itself, he exercised the same imaginary power as over its inhabitants and their affairs. He had never been in it, the length of a piece of fat black water-pipe which trailed itself over the area door into a damp stone passage, and had rather the air of a leech on the house that had "taken" wonderfully; but this was no impediment to his arranging it according to a plan of his own. It was a great dingy house with a quantity of dim side window and blank back premises, and it cost his mind a world of

trouble so to lay it out as to account for everything in its external appearance. But, this once done, was quite satisfactory, and he rested persuaded that he knew his way about the house blindfold: from the barred garrets in the high roof, to the two iron extinguishers before the main door—which seemed to request all lively visitors to have the kindness to put themselves out, before entering.

Assuredly, this stall of Silas Wegg's was the hardest little stall of all the sterile little stalls in London. It gave you the face-ache to look at his apples, the stomach-ache to look at his oranges, the tooth-ache to look at his nuts. Of the latter commodity he had always a grim little heap, on which lay a little wooden measure which had no discernible inside, and was considered to represent the penn'orth appointed by Magna Charta. Whether from too much east wind or no—it was an easterly corner—the stall, the stock, and the keeper, were all as dry as the Desert. Wegg was a knotty man, and a close-grained, with a face carved out of very hard material, that had just as much play of expression as a watchman's rattle. When he laughed, certain jerks occurred in it, and the rattle sprung. Sooth to say, he was so wooden a man that he seemed to have taken his wooden leg naturally, and rather suggested to the fanciful observer, that he might be expected—if his development received no untimely check—to be completely set up with a pair of wooden legs in about six months.

Mr Wegg was an observant person, or, as he himself said, "took a powerful sight of notice." He saluted all his regular passers-by every day, as he sat on his stool backed up by the lamp-post; and on the adaptable character of these salutes he greatly plumed himself. Thus, to the rector, he addressed a bow, compounded of lay deference, and a slight touch of the shady preliminary meditation at church; to the doctor, a confidential bow, as to a gentleman whose acquaintance with his inside he begged respectfully to acknowledge; before the quality he delighted to abase himself; and for Uncle Parker, who was in the army (at least, so he had settled it), he put his open hand to the side of his hat, in a military manner which that angry-eyed buttoned-up inflammatory-faced old gentleman appeared but imperfectly to appreciate.

The only article in which Silas dealt, that was not hard, was gingerbread. On a certain day, some wretched infant having

purchased the damp gingerbread-horse (fearfully out of condition), and the adhesive bird-cage, which had been exposed for the day's sale, he had taken a tin box from under his stool to produce a relay of those dreadful specimens, and was going to look in at the lid, when he said to himself, pausing: "Oh! Here you are again!"

The words referred to a broad, round-shouldered, one-sided old fellow in mourning, coming comically ambling towards the corner, dressed in a pea overcoat, and carrying a large stick. He wore thick shoes, and thick leather gaiters, and thick gloves like a hedger's. Both as to his dress and to himself, he was of an overlapping rhinoceros build, with folds in his cheeks, and his forehead, and his eyelids, and his lips, and his ears; but with bright, eager, childishly inquiring grey eyes, under his ragged eyebrows, and broad-brimmed hat. A very odd-looking old fellow altogether.

"Here you are again," repeated Mr Wegg, musing. "And what are you now? Are you in the Funns, or where are you? Have you lately come to settle in this neighbourhood, or do you own to another neighbourhood? Are you in independent circumstances, or is it wasting the motions of a bow on you? Come! I'll speculate! I'll invest a bow in you."

Which Mr Wegg, having replaced his tin box, accordingly did, as he rose to bait his gingerbread-trap for some other devoted infant. The salute was acknowledged with:

"Morning, sir! Morning! Morning!"

("Calls me sir!" said Mr Wegg to himself. "*He* won't answer. A bow gone!")

"Morning, morning, morning!"

"Appears to be rather a 'arty old cock, too," said Mr Wegg, as before. "Good morning to *you*, sir."

"Do you remember me, then?" asked his new acquaintance, stopping in his amble, one-sided, before the stall, and speaking in a pouncing way, though with great good-humour.

"I have noticed you go past our house, sir, several times in the course of the last week or so."

"Our house," repeated the other. "Meaning——?"

"Yes," said Mr Wegg, nodding, as the other pointed the clumsy forefinger of his right glove at the corner house.

"Oh! Now, what," pursued the old fellow, in an inquisitive

manner, carrying his knotted stick in his left arm as if it were a baby, "what do they allow you now?"

"It's job work that I do for our house," returned Silas, drily, and with reticence; "it's not yet brought to an exact allowance."

"Oh! It's not yet brought to an exact allowance? No! It's not yet brought to an exact allowance. Oh!—Morning, morning, morning!"

"Appears to be rather a cracked old cock," thought Silas, qualifying his former good opinion, as the other ambled off. But, in a moment he was back again with the question:

"How did you get your wooden leg?"

Mr Wegg replied (tartly to this personal inquiry), "In an accident."

"Do you like it?"

"Well! I haven't got to keep it warm," Mr Wegg made answer, in a sort of desperation occasioned by the singularity of the question.

"He hasn't," repeated the other to his knotted stick, as he gave it a hug; "he hasn't got—ha!—ha!—to keep it warm! Did you ever hear of the name of Boffin?"

"No," said Mr Wegg, who was growing restive under this examination. "I never did hear of the name of Boffin."

"Do you like it?"

"Why, no," retorted Mr Wegg, again approaching desperation; "I can't say I do."

"Why don't you like it?"

"I don't know why I don't," retorted Mr Wegg, approaching frenzy, "but I don't at all."

"Now, I'll tell you something that'll make you sorry for that," said the stranger, smiling, "My name's Boffin."

"I can't help it!" returned Mr Wegg. Implying in his manner the offensive addition, "and if I could, I wouldn't."

"But there's another chance for you," said Mr Boffin, smiling still. "Do you like the name of Nicodemus? Think it over. Nick, or Noddy."

"It is not, sir," Mr Wegg rejoined, as he sat down on his stool, with an air of gentle resignation, combined with melancholy candour; "it is not a name as I could wish any one that I had a respect for, to call *me* by; but there may be persons that would

not view it with the same objections.—I don't know why," Mr Wegg added, anticipating another question.

"Noddy Boffin," said that gentleman. "Noddy. That's my name. Noddy—or Nick—Boffin. What's your name?"

"Silas Wegg.—I don't," said Mr Wegg, bestirring himself to take the same precaution as before, "I don't know why Silas, and I don't know why Wegg."

"Now, Wegg," said Mr Boffin, hugging his stick closer, "I want to make a sort of offer to you. Do you remember when you first see me?"

The wooden leg looked at him with a meditative eye, and also with a softened air as descrying possibility of profit. "Let me think. I ain't quite sure, and yet I generally take a powerful sight of notice, too. Was it on a Monday morning, when the butcher-boy had been to our house for orders, and bought a ballad of me, which, being unacquainted with the tune, I run it over to him?"

"Right, Wegg, right! But he bought more than one."

"Yes, to be sure, sir; he bought several; and wishing to lay out his money to the best, he took my opinion to guide his choice, and we went over the collection together. To be sure we did. Here was him as it might be, and here was myself as it might be, and there was you, Mr Boffin, as you identically are, with your self-same stick under your wery same arm, and your wery same back towards us. To—be—sure!" added Mr Wegg, looking a little round Mr Boffin, to take him in the rear, and identify this last extraordinary coincidence, "your wery self-same back!"

"What do you think I was doing, Wegg?"

"I should judge, sir, that you might be glancing your eye down the street."

"No, Wegg. I was a listening."

"Was you, indeed?" said Mr Wegg, dubiously.

"Not in a dishonourable way, Wegg, because you was singing to the butcher; and you wouldn't sing secrets to a butcher in the street, you know."

"It never happened that I did so yet, to the best of my remembrance," said Mr Wegg, cautiously. "But I might do it. A man can't say what he might wish to do some day or another." (This, not to release any little advantage he might derive from Mr Boffin's avowal.)

"Well," repeated Boffin, "I was a listening to you and to him. And what do you—you haven't got another stool, have you? I'm rather thick in my breath."

"I haven't got another, but you're welcome to this," said Wegg, resigning it. "It's a treat to me to stand."

"Lard!" exclaimed Mr Boffin, in a tone of great enjoyment, as he settled himself down, still nursing his stick like a baby, "it's a pleasant place, this! And then to be shut in on each side, with these ballads, like so many book-leaf blinkers! Why, it's delightful!"

"If I am not mistaken, sir," Mr Wegg delicately hinted, resting a hand on his stall, and bending over the discursive Boffin, "you alluded to some offer or another that was in your mind?"

"I'm coming to it! All right. I'm coming to it! I was going to say that when I listened that morning, I listened with admiration amounting to haw. I thought to myself, 'Here's a man with a wooden leg—a literary man with——'"

"N—not exactly so, sir," said Mr Wegg.

"Why, you know every one of these songs by name and by tune, and if you want to read or to sing any one on 'em off straight, you've only to whip on your spectacles and do it!" cried Mr Boffin. "I see you at it!"

"Well, sir," returned Mr Wegg, with a conscious inclination of the head; "we'll say literary, then."

"A literary man—with a wooden leg—and all Print is open to him! That's what I thought to myself, that morning," pursued Mr Boffin, leaning forward to describe, uncramped by the clothes-horse, as large an arc as his right arm could make; "'all Print is open to him!' And it is, ain't it?"

"Why, truly, sir," Mr Wegg admitted with modesty; "I believe you couldn't show me the piece of English print, that I wouldn't be equal to collaring and throwing."

"On the spot?" said Mr Boffin.

"On the spot."

"I know'd it! Then consider this. Here am I, a man without a wooden leg, and yet all print is shut to me."

"Indeed, sir?" Mr Wegg returned with increasing self-complacency. "Education neglected?"

"Neg—lected!" repeated Boffin, with emphasis. "That ain't

no word for it. I don't mean to say but what if you showed me a B, I could so far give you change for it, as to answer Boffin."

"Come, come, sir," said Mr Wegg, throwing in a little encouragement, "that's something, too."

"It's something," answered Mr Boffin, "but I'll take my oath it ain't much."

"Perhaps it's not as much as could be wished by an inquiring mind, sir," Mr Wegg admitted.

"Now, look here. I'm retired from business. Me and Mrs Boffin—Henerietty Boffin—which her father's name was Henery, and her mother's name was Hetty, and so you get it—we live on a compittance, under the will of a diseased governor."

"Gentleman dead, sir?"

"Man alive, don't I tell you? A diseased governor? Now, it's too late for me to begin shovelling and sifting at alphabeds and grammar-books. I'm getting to be a old bird, and I want to take it easy. But I want some reading—some fine bold reading, some splendid book in a gorging Lord-Mayor's-Show of wollumes" (probably meaning gorgeous, but misled by association of ideas); "as'll reach right down your pint of view, and take time to go by you. How can I get that reading, Wegg? By," tapping him on the breast with the head of his thick stick, "paying a man truly qualified to do it, so much an hour (say twopence) to come and do it."

"Hem! Flattered, sir, I am sure," said Wegg, beginning to regard himself in quite a new light. "Hem! This is the offer you mentioned, sir?"

"Yes. Do you like it?"

"I am considering of it, Mr Boffin."

"I don't," said Boffin, in a free-handed manner, "want to tie a literary man—with a wooden leg—down too tight. A halfpenny an hour shan't part us. The hours are your own to choose, after you've done for the day with your house here. I live over Maiden Lane way—out Holloway direction—and you've only got to go East-and-by-North when you've finished here, and you're there. Twopence halfpenny an hour," said Boffin, taking a piece of chalk from his pocket and getting off the stool to work the sum on the top of it in his own way; "two long'uns and a short'un—twopence halfpenny; two short'uns is a long'un, and two two

long'uns is four long'uns—making five long'uns; six nights a week at five long'uns a night," scoring them all down separately, "and you mount up to thirty long'uns. A round'un! Half-a-crown!"

Pointing to this result as a large and satisfactory one, Mr Boffin smeared it out with his moistened glove, and sat down on the remains.

"Half-a-crown," said Wegg, meditating. "Yes. (It ain't much, sir.) Half-a-crown."

"Per week, you know."

"Per week. Yes. As to the amount of strain upon the intellect now. Was you thinking at all of poetry?" Mr Wegg inquired, musing.

"Would it come dearer?" Mr Boffin asked.

"It would come dearer," Mr Wegg returned. "For when a person comes to grind off poetry night after night, it is but right he should expect to be paid for its weakening effect on his mind."

"To tell you the truth, Wegg," said Boffin, "I wasn't thinking of poetry, except in so far as this:—If you was to happen now and then to feel yourself in the mind to tip me and Mrs Boffin one of your ballads, why then we should drop into poetry."

"I follow you, sir," said Wegg. "But not being a regular musical professional, I should be loath to engage myself for that; and therefore when I dropped into poetry, I should ask to be considered in the light of a friend."

At this, Mr Boffin's eyes sparkled, and he shook Silas earnestly by the hand: protesting that it was more than he could have asked, and that he took it very kindly indeed.

"What do you think of the terms, Wegg?" Mr Boffin then demanded, with unconcealed anxiety.

Silas, who had stimulated this anxiety by his hard reserve of manner, and who had begun to understand his man very well, replied with an air; as if he were saying something extraordinarily generous and great:

"Mr Boffin, I never bargain."

"So I should have thought of you!" said Mr Boffin, admiringly.

"No, sir. I never did 'aggle and I never will 'aggle. Consequently I meet you at once, free and fair, with—Done, for double the money!"

Mr Boffin seemed a little unprepared for this conclusion, but

assented, with the remark, "You know better what it ought to be than I do, Wegg," and again shook hands with him upon it.

"Could you begin to-night, Wegg?" he then demanded.

"Yes, sir," said Mr Wegg, careful to leave all the eagerness to him. "I see no difficulty if you wish it. You are provided with the needful implement—a book, sir?"

"Bought him at a sale," said Mr Boffin. "Eight wollumes. Red and gold. Purple ribbon in every wollume, to keep the place where you leave off. Do you know him?"

"The book's name, sir?" inquired Silas.

"I thought you might have know'd him without it," said Mr Boffin, slightly disappointed. "His name is Decline-and-Fall-Off-the-Rooshan-Empire." (Mr Boffin went over these stones slowly and with much caution.)

"Ay indeed!" said Mr Wegg, nodding his head with an air of friendly recognition.

"You know him, Wegg?"

"I haven't been not to say right slap through him, very lately," Mr Wegg made answer, "having been otherways employed, Mr Boffin. But know him? Old familiar declining and falling off the Rooshan? Rather, sir! Ever since I was not so high as your stick. Ever since my eldest brother left our cottage to enlist into the army. On which occasion, as the ballad that was made about it describes: .

Beside that cottage door, Mr Boffin,

A girl was on her knees;

She held aloft a snowy scarf, sir,

Which (my eldest brother noticed) fluttered in the breeze.

She breathed a prayer for him, Mr Boffin;

A prayer he could not hear.

And my eldest brother lean'd upon his sword, Mr Boffin,

And wiped away a tear.

Much impressed by this family circumstance, and also by the friendly disposition of Mr Wegg, as exemplified in his so soon dropping into poetry, Mr Boffin again shook hands with that ligneous sharper, and besought him to name his hour. Mr Wegg named eight.

"Where I live," said Mr Boffin, "is called The Bower. Boffin's Bower is the name Mrs Boffin christened it when we come into it

as a property. If you should meet with anybody that don't know it by that name (which hardly anybody does), when you've got nigh upon about a odd mile, or say and a quarter if you like, up Maiden Lane, Battle Bridge, ask for Harmony Jail, and you'll be put right. I shall expect you, Wegg," said Mr Boffin, clapping him on the shoulder with the greatest enthusiasm, "most jyfully. I shall have no peace or patience till you come. Print is now opening ahead of me. This night, a literary man—*with* a wooden leg"—he bestowed an admiring look upon that decoration, as if it greatly enhanced the relish of Mr Wegg's attainments—"will begin to lead me a new life! My fist again, Wegg. Morning, morning, morning!"

Left alone at his stall as the other ambled off, Mr Wegg subsided into his screen, produced a small pocket-handkerchief of a penitentially-scrubbing character, and took himself by the nose with a thoughtful aspect. Also, while he still grasped that feature, he directed several thoughtful looks down the street, after the retiring figure of Mr Boffin. But, profound gravity sat enthroned on Wegg's countenance. For, while he considered within himself that this was an old fellow of rare simplicity, that this was an opportunity to be improved, and that here might be money to be got beyond present calculation, still he compromised himself by no admission that his new engagement was at all out of his way, or involved the least element of the ridiculous. Mr Wegg would even have picked a handsome quarrel with any one who should have challenged his deep acquaintance with those aforesaid eight volumes of *Decline and Fall*. His gravity was unusual, portentous, and immeasurable, not because he admitted any doubt of himself, but because he perceived it necessary to forestall any doubt of himself in others. And herein he ranged with that very numerous class of impostors, who are quite as determined to keep up appearances to themselves, as to their neighbours.

A certain loftiness, likewise, took possession of Mr Wegg; a condescending sense of being in request as an official expounder of mysteries. It did not move him to commercial greatness, but rather to littleness, insomuch that if it had been within the possibilities of things for the wooden measure to hold fewer nuts than usual, it would have done so that day. But, when night came, and with her veiled eyes beheld him stumping towards Boffin's Bower, he was elated too.

The Bower was as difficult to find as Fair Rosamond's without the clue. Mr Wegg, having reached the quarter indicated, inquired for the Bower half-a-dozen times without the least success, until he remembered to ask for Harmony Jail. This occasioned a quick change in the spirits of a hoarse gentleman and a donkey, whom he had much perplexed.

"Why, yer mean Old Harmon's, do yer?" said the hoarse gentleman, who was driving his donkey in a truck, with a carrot for a whip. "Why didn't yer niver say so? Eddard and me is a goin' by *him*! Jump in."

Mr Wegg complied, and the hoarse gentleman invited his attention to the third person in company, thus:

"Now, you look at Eddard's ears. What was it as you named, agin? Whisper."

Mr Wegg whispered, "Boffin's Bower."

"Eddard! (keep yer hi on his ears) cut away to Boffin's Bower!" Edward, with his ears lying back, remained immovable.

"Eddard! (keep yer hi on his ears) cut away to Old Harmon's."

Edward instantly pricked up his ears to their utmost, and rattled off at such a pace that Mr Wegg's conversation was jolted out of him in a most dislocated state.

"Was-it-Ev-verajail?" asked Mr Wegg, holding on.

"Not a proper jail, wot you and me would get committed to," returned his escort; "they giv' it the name, on accounts of Old Harmon living solitary there."

"And-why-did-they-callitharm-Ony?" asked Wegg.

"On accounts of his never agreeing with nobody. Like a speeches of chaff. Harmon's Jail; Harmony Jail. Working it round like."

"Do you know-Mist-Erboff-in?" asked Wegg.

"I should think so! Everybody do about here. Eddard knows him. (Keep yer hi on his ears.) Noddy Boffin, Eddard!"

The effect of the name was so very alarming, in respect of causing a temporary disappearance of Edward's head, casting his hind hoofs in the air, greatly accelerating the pace and increasing the jolting, that Mr Wegg was fain to devote his attention exclusively to holding on, and to relinquish his desire of ascertaining whether this homage to Boffin was to be considered complimentary or the reverse.

Presently, Edward stopped at a gateway, and Wegg discreetly lost no time in slipping out at the back of the truck. The moment he was landed, his late driver with a wave of the carrot, said "Supper, Eddard!" and he, the hind hoofs, the truck, and Edward, all seemed to fly into the air together, in a kind of apotheosis.

Pushing the gate, which stood ajar, Wegg looked into an enclosed space where certain tall dark mounds rose high against the sky, and where the pathway to the Bower was indicated, as the moonlight showed, between two lines of broken crockery set in ashes. A white figure advancing along this path, proved to be nothing more ghostly than Mr Boffin, easily attired for the pursuit of knowledge, in an undress garment of short white smock-frock. Having received his literary friend with great cordiality, he conducted him to the interior of the Bower and there presented him to Mrs Boffin:—a stout lady of a rubicund and cheerful aspect, dressed (to Mr Wegg's consternation) in a low evening dress of sable satin, and a large black velvet hat and feathers.

"Mrs Boffin, Wegg," said Boffin, "is a highflyer at Fashion. And her make is such, that she does it credit. As to myself, I ain't yet as Fash'nable as I may come to be. Henerietty, old lady, this is the gentleman that's a going to decline and fall off the Rooshan Empire."

"And I am sure I hope it'll do you both good," said Mrs Boffin.

It was the queerest of rooms, fitted and furnished more like a luxurious amateur tap-room than anything else within the ken of Silas Wegg. There were two wooden settles by the fire, one on either side of it, with a corresponding table before each. On one of these tables, the eight volumes were ranged flat, in a row, like a galvanic battery; on the other, certain squat case-bottles of inviting appearance seemed to stand on tiptoe to exchange glances with Mr Wegg over a front row of tumblers and a basin of white sugar. On the hob, a kettle steamed; on the hearth, a cat reposed. Facing the fire between the settles, a sofa, a footstool, and a little table, formed a centrepiece devoted to Mrs Boffin. They were garish in taste and colour, but were expensive articles of drawing-room furniture that had a very odd look beside the settles and the flaring gaslight pendent from the ceiling. There was a flowery carpet on the floor; but, instead of reaching to the fireside, its glowing vegetation stopped short at Mrs Boffin's footstool, and

gave place to a region of sand and sawdust. Mr Wegg also noticed, with admiring eyes, that, while the flowery land displayed such hollow ornamentation as stuffed birds and waxen fruits under glass shades, there were, in the territory where vegetation ceased, compensatory shelves on which the best part of a large pie and likewise of a cold joint were plainly discernible among other solids. The room itself was large, though low; and the heavy frames of its old-fashioned windows, and the heavy beams in its crooked ceiling, seemed to indicate that it had once been a house of some mark standing alone in the country.

"Do you like it, Wegg?" asked Mr Boffin, in his pouncing manner.

"I admire it greatly, sir," said Wegg. "Peculiar comfort at this fireside, sir."

"Do you understand it, Wegg?"

"Why, in a general way, sir," Mr Wegg was beginning slowly and knowingly, with his head stuck on one side, as evasive people do begin, when the other cut him short:

"You *don't* understand it, Wegg, and I'll explain it. These arrangements is made by mutual consent between Mrs Boffin and me. Mrs Boffin, as I've mentioned, is a highflyer at Fashion; at present I'm not. I don't go higher than comfort, and comfort of the sort that I'm equal to the enjoyment of. Well then. Where would be the good of Mrs Boffin and me quarrelling over it? We never did quarrel, before we come into Boffin's Bower as a property; why quarrel when we *have* come into Boffin's Bower as a property? So Mrs Boffin, she keeps up her part of the room, in her way; I keep up my part of the room in mine. In consequence of which we have at once, Sociability (I should go melancholy mad without Mrs Boffin), Fashion, and Comfort. If I get by degrees to be a highflyer at Fashion, then Mrs Boffin will by degrees come for'arder. If Mrs Boffin should ever be less of a dab at Fashion than she is at the present time, then Mrs Boffin's carpet would go back'arder. If we should both continny as we are, why then *here* we are, and give us a kiss, old lady."

Mrs Boffin, who, perpetually smiling, had approached and drawn her plump arm through her lord's, most willingly complied. Fashion, in the form of her black velvet hat and feathers, tried to prevent it; but got deservedly crushed in the endeavour.

"So now, Wegg," said Mr Boffin, wiping his mouth with an air of much refreshment, "you begin to know us as we are. This is a charming spot, is the Bower, but you must get to appreciate it by degrees. It's a spot to find out the merits of, little by little, and a new 'un every day. There's a serpentine walk up each of the mounds, that gives you the yard and neighbourhood changing every moment. When you get to the top, there's a view of the neighbouring premises, not to be surpassed. The premises of Mrs Boffin's late father (Canine Provision Trade), you look down into, as if they was your own. And the top of the High Mound is crowned with a lattice-work Arbour, in which, if you don't read out loud many a book in the summer, ay, and as a friend, drop many a time into poetry too, it shan't be my fault. Now, what'll you read on?"

"Thank you, sir," returned Wegg, as if there were nothing new in his reading at all. "I generally do it on gin and water."

"Keeps the organ moist, does it, Wegg?" asked Mr Boffin with innocent eagerness.

"N-no, sir," replied Wegg, coolly, "I should hardly describe it so, sir. I should say, mellers it. Mellers it, is the word I should employ, Mr Boffin."

His wooden conceit and craft kept exact pace with the delighted expectation of his victim. The visions rising before his mercenary mind, of the many ways in which this connexion was to be turned to account, never obscured the foremost idea natural to a dull overreaching man, that he must not make himself too cheap.

Mrs Boffin's Fashion, as a less inexorable deity than the idol usually worshipped under that name, did not forbid her mixing for her literary guest, or asking if he found the result to his liking. On his returning a gracious answer and taking his place at the literary settle, Mr Boffin began to compose himself as a listener, at the opposite settle, with exultant eyes.

"Sorry to deprive you of a pipe, Wegg," he said, filling his own, "but you can't do both together. Oh! and another thing I forgot to name! When you come in here of an evening, and look round you, and notice anything on a shelf that happens to catch your fancy, mention it."

Wegg, who had been going to put on his spectacles, immediately laid them down, with the sprightly observation:

"You read my thoughts, sir. *Do* my eyes deceive me, or is that object up there a—a pie? It can't be a pie."

"Yes, it's a pie, Wegg," replied Mr Boffin, with a glance of some little discomfiture at the *Decline and Fall*.

"*Have* I lost my smell for fruits, or is it a apple pie, sir?" asked Wegg.

"It's a veal and ham pie," said Mr Boffin.

"Is it, indeed, sir? And it would be hard, sir, to name the pie that is a better pie than a veal and hammer," said Mr Wegg, nodding his head emotionally.

"Have some, Wegg?"

"Thank you, Mr Boffin, I think I will, at your invitation. I wouldn't at any other party's, at the present juncture; but at yours, sir!—And meaty jelly too, especially when a little salt, which is the case where there's ham, is melling to the organ, is very melling to the organ." Mr Wegg did not say what organ, but spoke with a cheerful generality.

So the pie was brought down, and the worthy Mr Boffin exercised his patience until Wegg, in the exercise of his knife and fork, had finished the dish: only profiting by the opportunity to inform Wegg that although it was not strictly Fashionable to keep the contents of a larder thus exposed to view, he (Mr Boffin) considered it hospitable: for the reason, that instead of saying, in a comparatively unmeaning manner, to a visitor, "There are such and such edibles downstairs; will you have anything up?" you took the bold practical course of saying, "Cast your eye along the shelves, and, if you see anything you like there, have it down."

And now, Mr Wegg at length pushed away his plate and put on his spectacles, and Mr Boffin lighted his pipe and looked with beaming eyes into the opening world before him, and Mrs Boffin reclined in a fashionable manner on her sofa: as one who would be part of the audience if she found she could, and would go to sleep if she found she couldn't.

"Hem!" began Wegg. "This, Mr Boffin and Lady, is the first chapter of the first wollume of the *Decline and Fall* off——" here he looked hard at the book, and stopped.

"What's the matter, Wegg?"

"Why, it comes into my mind, do you know, sir," said Wegg with an air of insinuating frankness (having first again looked

hard at the book), "that you made a little mistake this morning, which I had meant to set you right in, only something put it out of my head. I think you said Rooshan Empire, sir?"

"It is Rooshan; ain't it, Wegg?"

"No, sir. Roman. Roman."

"What's the difference, Wegg?"

"The difference, sir?" Mr Wegg was faltering and in danger of breaking down, when a bright thought flashed upon him. "The difference, sir? There you place me in a difficulty, Mr Boffin. Suffice it to observe, that the difference is best postponed to some other occasion when Mrs Boffin does not honour us with her company. In Mrs Boffin's presence, sir, we had better drop it."

Mr Wegg thus came out of his disadvantage with quite a chivalrous air, and not only that, but by dint of repeating with a manly delicacy, "In Mrs Boffin's presence, sir, we had better drop it!" turned the disadvantage on Boffin, who felt that he had committed himself in a very painful manner.

Then, Mr Wegg, in a dry unflinching way, entered on his task; going straight across country at everything that came before him; taking all the hard words, biographical and geographical; getting rather shaken by Hadrian, Trajan, and the Antonines; stumbling at Polybius (pronounced Polly Beeious, and supposed by Mr Boffin to be a Roman virgin, and by Mrs Boffin to be responsible for that necessity of dropping it); heavily unseated by Titus Antoninus Pius; up again and galloping smoothly with Augustus; finally, getting over the ground well with Commodus; who, under the appellation of Commodious, was held by Mr Boffin to have been quite unworthy of his English origin, and "not to have acted up to his name" in his government of the Roman people. With the death of this personage, Mr Wegg terminated his first reading; long before which consummation several total eclipses of Mrs Boffin's candle behind her black velvet disc, would have been very alarming, but for being regularly accompanied by a potent smell of burnt pens when her feathers took fire, which acted as a restorative and woke her. Mr Wegg having read on by rote and attached as few ideas as possible to the text, came out of the encounter fresh; but, Mr Boffin, who had soon laid down his unfinished pipe, and had ever since sat intently staring with his eyes and mind at the confounding enormities of the Romans, was so severely punished

that he could hardly wish his literary friend Good-night, and articulate "To-morrow."

"Commodious," gasped Mr Boffin, staring at the moon, after letting Wegg out of the gate and fastening it: "Commodious fights in that wild-beast-show, seven hundred and thirty-five times, in one character only! As if that wasn't stunning enough, a hundred lions is turned into the same wild-beast-show all at once! As if that wasn't stunning enough, Commodious, in another character, kills 'em all off in a hundred goes! As if that wasn't stunning enough, Vittle-us (and well named too) eat six millions' worth, English money, in seven months! Wegg takes it easy, but upon-my-soul to a old bird like myself these are scarers. And even now that Commodious is strangled, I don't see a way to our bettering ourselves." Mr Boffin added as he turned his pensive steps towards the Bower and shook his head, "I didn't think this morning there was half so many Scarers in Print. But I'm in for it now!"

MILTON

JOHN MILTON (1608-74) was born in London and educated at St Paul's School and Cambridge. His careful studies made him one of the most learned men of his time. *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, *Comus* and *Lycidas* are among his beautiful earlier poems. He spent many months travelling in Italy and when he returned to England he wrote pamphlets on the side of the parliament. In middle life he became totally blind, and to this trouble was added the danger that threatened him when the puritan cause was overthrown and Charles II became king. It was during his blindness and distress that *Paradise Lost*, the greatest of his poems, was written. Milton died in London, and was buried at St Giles's, Cripplegate. Milton was a great lover of music, and it is fitting that much of his verse has been "wedded to divine sounds" by Handel, one of whose finest solos, "Let the bright Seraphim," is based upon lines in this poem.

AT A SOLEMN MUSIC

Blest pair of Sirens, pledges of Heaven's joy,
Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,
Wed your divine sounds, and mix'd power employ,
Dead things with inbreathed sense able to pierce;
And to our high-raised phantasy present
That undisturbed song of pure concent,
Aye sung before the sapphire-colour'd throne
To him that sits thereon,

With saintly shout and solemn jubilee;
 Where the bright Seraphim in burning row
 Their loud uplifted angel-trumpets blow,
 And the Cherubic host in thousand quires
 Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,
 With those just Spirits that wear victorious palms,
 Hymns devout and holy psalms
 Singing everlastingly:
 That we on Earth, with undiscording voice,
 May rightly answer that melodious noise;
 As once we did, till disproportion'd sin
 Jarr'd against nature's chime, and with harsh din
 Broke the fair music that all creatures made
 To their great Lord, whose love their motion sway'd
 In perfect diapason, whilst they stood
 In first obedience, and their state of good.
 O, may we soon again renew that song,
 And keep in tune with Heaven, till God ere long
 To his celestial consort us unite,
 To live with him, and sing in endless morn of light!

PLATO

PLATO, the great Greek philosopher, lived some four hundred years before the birth of Christ. His works are in the form of dialogues, or discussions between various characters. The chief of these characters is the philosopher Socrates, who conducts the discussion by the method of question and answer. Socrates was charged by the governing council of Athens with corrupting the minds of the young by teaching them not to care about the ancient gods of Greece. He defended himself nobly but was condemned to death. He accepted his fate calmly and drank the fatal dose of hemlock.

The first of the following passages is taken from the dialogue called *Crito*. Crito visits Socrates in prison to persuade him to escape, on the ground that his condemnation was unjust. The second passage is taken from the dialogue called *Phaedo*. Phaedo, a friend and follower of Socrates describes the last evening of the philosopher's life, his conversation with his friends and his manner of meeting death. The translation used is that of Benjamin Jowett (1817-93), Master of Balliol.

THE DEATH OF SOCRATES

I

Socrates. Why have you come at this hour, Crito? it must be quite early?

Crito. Yes, certainly.

Soc. What is the exact time?

Cr. The dawn is breaking.

Soc. I wonder that the keeper of the prison would let you in.

Cr. He knows me, because I often come, Socrates; moreover, I have done him a kindness.

Soc. And are you only just arrived?

Cr. No, I came some time ago.

Soc. Then why did you sit and say nothing, instead of at once awakening me?

Cr. I should not have liked myself, Socrates, to be in such great trouble and unrest as you are—indeed I should not: I have been watching with amazement your peaceful slumbers; and for that reason I did not awake you, because I wished to minimize the pain. I have always thought you to be of a happy disposition; but never did I see anything like the easy, tranquil manner in which you bear this calamity.

Soc. Why, Crito, when a man has reached my age he ought not to be repining at the approach of death.

Cr. And yet other old men find themselves in similar misfortunes, and age does not prevent them from repining.

Soc. That is true. But you have not told me why you come at this early hour.

Cr. I come to bring you a message which is sad and painful; not, as I believe, to yourself, but to all of us who are your friends, and saddest of all to me.

Soc. What? Has the ship come from Delos, on the arrival of which I am to die?

Cr. No, the ship has not actually arrived, but she will probably be here to-day, as persons who have come from Sunium tell me that they left her there; and therefore to-morrow, Socrates, will be the last day of your life.

Soc. Very well, Crito; if such is the will of God, I am willing; but my belief is that there will be a delay of a day.

Cr. Why do you think so?

Soc. I will tell you. I am to die on the day after the arrival of the ship.

Cr. Yes; that is what the authorities say.

Soc. But I do not think that the ship will be here until to-morrow; this I infer from a vision which I had last night, or rather only just now, when you fortunately allowed me to sleep.

Cr. And what was the nature of the vision?

Soc. There appeared to me the likeness of a woman, fair and comely, clothed in bright raiment, who called to me and said: O Socrates,

The third day hence to fertile Phthia shalt thou go.

Cr. What a singular dream, Socrates!

Soc. There can be no doubt about the meaning, Crito, I think.

Cr. Yes; the meaning is only too clear. But, oh! my beloved Socrates, let me entreat you once more to take my advice and escape. For if you die I shall not only lose a friend who can never be replaced, but there is another evil: people who do not know you and me will believe that I might have saved you if I had been willing to give money, but that I did not care. Now, can there be a worse disgrace than this—that I should be thought to value money more than the life of a friend? For the many will not be persuaded that I wanted you to escape, and that you refused.

[Crito uses many arguments to convince Socrates that it would be right for him to escape.]

Soc. Let us consider the matter together, and do you either refute me if you can, and I will be convinced; or else cease, my dear friend, from repeating to me that I ought to escape against the wishes of the Athenians: for I highly value your attempts to persuade me to do so, but I may not be persuaded against my own better judgment. And now please to consider my first position, and try how you can best answer me.

Cr. I will.

Soc. Are we to say that we are never intentionally to do wrong, or that in one way we ought and in another way we ought not to do wrong, or is doing wrong always evil and dishonourable, as I was just now saying, and as has been already acknowledged by us? Are all our former admissions which were made within a few days to be thrown away? And have we, at our age, been earnestly discoursing with one another all our life long only to discover that we are no better than children? Or, in spite of the opinion of the many, and in spite of consequences whether better or worse, shall

we insist on the truth of what was then said, that injustice is always an evil and dishonour to him who acts unjustly? Shall we say so or not?

Cr. Yes.

Soc. Then we must do no wrong?

Cr. Certainly not.

Soc. Nor when injured injure in return, as the many imagine; for we must injure no one at all?

Cr. Clearly not.

Soc. Again, Crito, may we do evil?

Cr. Surely not, Socrates.

Soc. And what of doing evil in return for evil, which is the morality of the many—is that just or not?

Cr. Not just.

Soc. For doing evil to another is the same as injuring him?

Cr. Very true.

Soc. Then we ought not to retaliate or render evil for evil to any one, whatever evil we may have suffered from him. But I would have you consider, Crito, whether you really mean what you are saying. For this opinion has never been held, and never will be held, by any considerable number of persons; and those who are agreed and those who are not agreed upon this point have no common ground, and can only despise one another when they see how widely they differ. Tell me, then, whether you agree with and assent to my first principle, that neither injury nor retaliation nor warding off evil by evil is ever right. And shall that be the premiss of our argument? Or do you decline and dissent from this? For so I have ever thought, and continue to think; but, if you are of another opinion, let me hear what you have to say. If, however, you remain of the same mind as formerly, I will proceed to the next step.

Cr. You may proceed, for I have not changed my mind.

Soc. Then I will go on to the next point, which may be put in the form of a question:—Ought a man to do what he admits to be right, or ought he to betray the right?

Cr. He ought to do what he thinks right.

Soc. But if this is true, what is the application? In leaving the prison against the will of the Athenians, do I wrong any? or rather do I not wrong those whom I ought least to wrong? Do I

not desert the principles which were acknowledged by us to be just—what do you say?

Cr. I cannot tell, Socrates; for I do not know.

[Socrates then imagines that the whole State of Athens appear before him in a body to describe all that every citizen owes to the country that has produced him, nourished him, educated him and protected him, and to warn him of the disgrace that must befall everyone that flees from the law even when the law may seem unjust. The State is supposed to be speaking in the passage that follows.]

“Not so, Socrates, if you will take our advice; do not make yourself ridiculous by escaping out of the city.

“For just consider, if you transgress and err in this sort of way, what good will you do either to yourself or to your friends? That your friends will be driven into exile and deprived of citizenship, or will lose their property, is tolerably certain; and you yourself, if you fly to one of the neighbouring cities, as, for example, Thebes or Megara, both of which are well governed, will come to them as an enemy, Socrates, and their government will be against you, and all patriotic citizens will cast an evil eye upon you as a subverter of the laws, and you will confirm in the minds of the judges the justice of their own condemnation of you. For he who is a corrupter of the laws is more than likely to be a corrupter of the young and foolish portion of mankind. Will you then flee from well-ordered cities and virtuous men? and is existence worth having on these terms? Or will you go to them without shame, and talk to them, Socrates? And what will you say to them? What you say here about virtue and justice and institutions and laws being the best things among men? Would that be decent of you? Surely not. But if you go away from well-governed states to Crito’s friends in Thessaly, where there is great disorder and licence, they will be charmed to hear the tale of your escape from prison, set off with ludicrous particulars of the manner in which you were wrapped in a goatskin or some other disguise, and metamorphosed as the manner is of runaways; but will there be no one to remind you that in your old age you were not ashamed to violate the most sacred laws from a miserable desire of a little more life? Perhaps not, if you keep them in a good temper; but if they are out of temper you will hear many degrading things; you will live, but how?—as the flatterer of all men, and the servant

of all men; and doing what?—eating and drinking in Thessaly, having gone abroad in order that you may get a dinner. And where will be your fine sentiments about justice and virtue? Say that you wish to live for the sake of your children—you want to bring them up and educate them—will you take them into Thessaly and deprive them of Athenian citizenship? Is this the benefit which you will confer upon them? Or are you under the impression that they will be better cared for and educated here if you are still alive, although absent from them; for your friends will take care of them? Do you fancy that if you are an inhabitant of Thessaly they will take care of them, and if you are an inhabitant of the other world that they will not take care of them? Nay; but if they who call themselves friends are good for anything, they will—to be sure they will.

“Listen, then, Socrates, to us who have brought you up. Think not of life and children first, and of justice afterwards, but of justice first, that you may be justified before the princes of the world below. For neither will you nor any that belong to you be happier or holier or juster in this life, or happier in another, if you do as Crito bids. Now you depart in innocence, a sufferer and not a doer of evil; a victim, not of the laws but of men. But if you go forth, returning evil for evil, and injury for injury, breaking the covenants and agreements which you have made with us, and wronging those whom you ought least of all to wrong, that is to say, yourself, your friends, your country, and us, we shall be angry with you while you live, and our brethren, the laws in the world below, will receive you as an enemy; for they will know that you have done your best to destroy us. Listen, then, to us and not to Crito.”

This, dear Crito, is the voice which I seem to hear murmuring in my ears, like the sound of the flute in the ears of the mystic; that voice, I say, is humming in my ears, and prevents me from hearing any other. And I know that anything more which you may say will be vain. Yet speak, if you have anything to say.

Cr. I have nothing to say, Socrates.

Soc. Leave me then, Crito, to fulfil the will of God, and to follow whither he leads.

[On the evening of his death, Socrates in prison has been discoursing to his friends about the immortality of the soul.]

Wherefore, I say, let a man be of good cheer about his soul, who having cast away the pleasures and ornaments of the body as alien to him and working harm rather than good, has sought after the pleasures of knowledge; and has arrayed the soul, not in some foreign attire, but in her own proper jewels, temperance, and justice, and courage, and nobility, and truth—in these adorned she is ready to go on her journey to the world below, when her hour comes. You, Simmias and Cebes, and all other men, will depart at some time or other. Me already, as a tragic poet would say, the voice of fate calls. Soon I must drink the poison; and I think that I had better repair to the bath first, in order that the women may not have the trouble of washing my body after I am dead.

When he had done speaking, Crito said: And have you any commands for us, Socrates—anything to say about your children, or any other matter in which we can serve you?

Nothing particular, Crito, he replied: only, as I have always told you, take care of yourselves; that is a service which you may be ever rendering to me and mine and to all of us, whether you promise to do so or not. But if you have no thought for yourselves, and care not to walk according to the rule which I have prescribed for you, not now for the first time, however much you may profess or promise at the moment, it will be of no avail.

We will do our best, said Crito: And in what way shall we bury you?

In any way that you like; but you must get hold of me, and take care that I do not run away from you. Then he turned to us, and added with a smile:—I cannot make Crito believe that I am the same Socrates who have been talking and conducting the argument; he fancies that I am the other Socrates whom he will soon see, a dead body—and he asks, How shall he bury me? And though I have spoken many words in the endeavour to show that when I have drunk the poison I shall leave you and go to the joys of the blessed,—these words of mine, with which I was comforting you and myself, have had, as I perceive, no effect upon Crito.

And therefore I want you to be surety for me to him now, as at the trial he was surety to the judges for me: but let the promise be of another sort; for he was surety for me to the judges that I would remain, and you must be my surety to him that I shall not remain, but go away and depart; and then he will suffer less at my death, and not be grieved when he sees my body being burned or buried. I would not have him sorrow at my hard lot, or say at the burial, Thus we lay out Socrates, or, Thus we follow him to the grave or bury him; for false words are not only evil in themselves, but they infect the soul with evil. Be of good cheer then, my dear Crito, and say that you are burying my body only, and do with that whatever is usual, and what you think best.

When he had spoken these words, he arose and went into a chamber to bathe; Crito followed him and told us to wait. So we remained behind, talking and thinking of the subject of discourse, and also of the greatness of our sorrow; he was like a father of whom we were being bereaved, and we were about to pass the rest of our lives as orphans. When he had taken the bath his children were brought to him—he had two young sons and an elder one; and the women of his family also came, and he talked to them and gave them a few directions in the presence of Crito; then he dismissed them and returned to us.

Now the hour of sunset was near, for a good deal of time had passed while he was within. When he came out, he sat down with us again after his bath, but not much was said. Soon the jailer, who was the servant of the Eleven, entered and stood by him, saying:—To you, Socrates, whom I know to be the noblest and gentlest and best of all who ever came to this place, I will not impute the angry feelings of other men, who rage and swear at me, when, in obedience to the authorities, I bid them drink the poison—indeed, I am sure that you will not be angry with me; for others, as you are aware, and not I, are to blame. And so fare you well, and try to bear lightly what must needs be—you know my errand. Then bursting into tears he turned away and went out.

Socrates looked at him and said: I return your good wishes, and will do as you bid. Then turning to us, he said, How charming the man is: since I have been in prison he has always been coming to see me, and at times he would talk to me, and was as good to

me as could be, and now see how generously he sorrows on my account. We must do as he says, Crito; and therefore let the cup be brought, if the poison is prepared: if not, let the attendant prepare some.

Yet, said Crito, the sun is still upon the hill-tops, and I know that many a one has taken the draught late, and after the announcement has been made to him, he has eaten and drunk, and enjoyed the society of his beloved; do not hurry—there is time enough.

Socrates said: Yes, Crito, and they of whom you speak are right in so acting, for they think that they will be gainers by the delay; but I am right in not following their example, for I do not think that I should gain anything by drinking the poison a little later; I should only be ridiculous in my own eyes for sparing and saving a life which is already forfeit. Please then to do as I say, and not to refuse me.

Crito made a sign to the servant, who was standing by; and he went out, and having been absent for some time, returned with the jailer carrying the cup of poison. Socrates said: You, my good friend, who are experienced in these matters, shall give me directions how I am to proceed. The man answered: You have only to walk about until your legs are heavy, and then to lie down, and the poison will act. At the same time he handed the cup to Socrates, who in the easiest and gentlest manner, without the least fear or change of colour or feature, looking at the man with all his eyes, as his manner was, took the cup and said: What do you say about making a libation out of this cup to any god? May I, or not? The man answered: We only prepare, Socrates, just so much as we deem enough. I understand, he said: but I may and must ask the gods to prosper my journey from this to the other world—even so—and so be it according to my prayer. Then raising the cup to his lips, quite readily and cheerfully he drank off the poison. And hitherto most of us had been able to control our sorrow; but now when we saw him drinking, and saw too that he had finished the draught, we could no longer forbear, and in spite of myself my own tears were flowing fast; so that I covered my face and wept, not for him, but at the thought of my own calamity in having to part from such a friend. Nor was I the first; for Crito, when he found himself unable to restrain his tears,

had got up, and I followed; and at that moment, Apollodorus, who had been weeping all the time, broke out in a loud and passionate cry which made cowards of us all. Socrates alone retained his calmness: What is this strange outcry? he said. I sent away the women mainly in order that they might not misbehave in this way, for I have been told that a man should die in peace. Be quiet then, and have patience. When we heard his words we were ashamed, and refrained our tears; and he walked about until, as he said, his legs began to fail, and then he lay on his back, according to the directions, and the man who gave him the poison now and then looked at his feet and legs; and after a while he pressed his foot hard, and asked him if he could feel; and he said, No; and then his leg, and so upwards and upwards, and showed us that he was cold and stiff. And he felt them himself, and said: When the poison reaches the heart, that will be the end. He was beginning to grow cold about the groin, when he uncovered his face, for he had covered himself up, and said—they were his last words—he said: Crito, I owe a cock to Asclepius; will you remember to pay the debt? The debt shall be paid, said Crito; is there anything else? There was no answer to this question; but in a minute or two a movement was heard, and the attendants uncovered him; his eyes were set, and Crito closed his eyes and mouth.

Such was the end, Echecrates, of our friend; concerning whom I may truly say, that of all the men of his time whom I have known, he was the wisest and justest and best.

ANDREW LANG

ANDREW LANG (1844-1912) was born in Scotland and educated at two universities—St Andrews and Oxford, the “*almae matres*” of the following lines. He wrote much on literary and historical subjects and published many delightful ballades.

ALMAE MATRES

St Andrews by the Northern Sea,

A haunted town it is to me!

A little city, worn and grey,

The grey North Ocean girds it round,
And o'er the rocks, and up the bay,

The long sea-rollers surge and sound.

And still the thin and biting spray
Drives down the melancholy street,
And still endure, and still decay,
Towers that the salt winds vainly beat.
Ghost-like and shadowy they stand
Dim mirrored in the wet sea-sand.

St Leonard's chapel, long ago
We loitered idly where the tall
Fresh-budded mountain ashes blow
Within thy desecrated wall:
The tough roots rent the tomb below,
The April birds sang clamorous,
We did not dream, we could not know
How hardly Fate would deal with us!

O, broken minster, looking forth
Beyond the bay, above the town,
O, winter of the kindly North,
O, college of the scarlet gown,
And shining sands beside the sea,
And stretch of links beyond the sand,
Once more I watch you, and to me
It is as if I touched his hand!

And therefore art thou yet more dear,
O, little city, grey and sere,
Though shrunk from thine ancient pride
And lonely by thy lonely sea,
Than these fair halls on Isis' side,
Where Youth an hour came back to me!

A land of waters green and clear,
Of willows and of poplars tall,
And, in the spring-time of the year,
The white may breaking over all,
And Pleasure quick to come at call.
And summer rides by marsh and wold,
And Autumn with her crimson pall
About the towers of Magdalen rolled;

And strange enchantments from the past,
 And memories of the friends of old,
 And strong Tradition, binding fast
 The "flying terms" with bands of gold,—

All these hath Oxford: all are dear,
 But dearer far the little town,
 The drifting surge, the wintry year,
 The college of the scarlet gown.

*St Andrews by the Northern Sea,
 That is a haunted town to me!*

EDWARD CRACROFT LEFROY

EDWARD CRACROFT LEFROY (1855-91) was educated at Blackheath and Oxford. He wrote many sonnets, including "Echoes from Theocritus."

A FOOTBALL PLAYER

If I could paint you, friend, as you stand there,
 Guard of the goal, defensive, open-eyed,
 Watching the tortured bladder slide and glide
 Under the twinkling feet; arms bare, head bare,
 The breeze a-tremble through crow-tufts of hair;
 Red-brown in face, and ruddier having spied
 A wily foeman breaking from the side;
 Aware of him,—of all else unaware:
 If I could limn you, as you leap and fling
 Your weight against his passage, like a wall;
 Clutch him, and collar him, and rudely cling
 For one brief moment till he falls—you fall:
 My sketch would have what Art can never give—
 Sinew and breath and body; it would live.

A CRICKET BOWLER

Two minutes' rest till the next man goes in!
 The tired arms lie with every sinew slack
 On the mown grass. Unbent the supple back—
 And elbows apt to make the leather spin
 Up the slow bat and round the unwary shin,—

In knavish hands a most unkindly knack;
But no guile shelters under this boy's black
Crisp hair, frank eyes, and honest English skin.
Two minutes only. Conscious of a name,
The new man plants his weapon with profound
Long-practised skill that no mere trick may scare.
Not loth, the rested lad resumes the game:
The flung ball takes one madding tortuous bound,
And the mid-stump three somersaults in air.

LIFE AND DEATH

I. CERVANTES

"I would, Sancho," said Don Quixote, "that thou wert favourably disposed towards the drama, and, as a necessary consequence, towards those who represent and produce it, for they are all instruments of great good to the state, placing before us at every step a mirror in which we may see vividly displayed what goes on in human life; nor is there any similitude that shows us in more life-like fashion what we are and what we must come to, than the play and the players. Come, tell me, hast thou not seen a play acted in which kings, emperors, pontiffs, knights, ladies, and divers other personages were introduced? One plays the villain, another the knave, this one the merchant, that the soldier, one the sharp-witted fool, another the foolish lover; and when the play is over, and they have put off the dresses they wore in it, all the actors become equal."

"Yes, I have seen that," said Sancho.

"Well then," said Don Quixote, "the same thing happens in the comedy and life of this world, where some play emperors, others popes, and, in short, all the characters that can be brought into a play; but when it is over, that is to say when life ends, death strips them all of the garments that distinguish one from the other, and all are equal in the grave."

"A fine comparison!" said Sancho; "though not so new but that I have heard it many and many a time, as well as that other one of the game of chess; how, so long as the game lasts, each



‘AT FIRST THE INFANT’

Bambino from the Spedale degli Innocenti, Florence

Della Robbia



'THEN THE SCHOOLBOY'

The Leslie Boy

Raeburn

piece has its own particular office, and when the game is finished they are all mixed, jumbled up and shaken together, and stowed away in the bag, which is much like ending life in the grave."

Don Quixote, pt II, chap. 12.

II. OMAR KHAYYAM

[EDWARD FITZGERALD]

For in and out, above, about, below,
'Tis nothing but a Magic Shadow-show,
 Played in a Box whose candle is the Sun,
Round which we Phantom figures come and go.

'Tis all a Chequer-board of Nights and Days
Where Destiny with Men for Pieces plays,
 Hither and thither moves, and mates, and slays,
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

III. SHAKESPEARE

THE SEVEN AGES

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players:
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.
And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,
In fair round belly with good capon lined,
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,

Full of wise saws and modern instances;
 And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
 Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon,
 With spectacles on nose and pouch on side;
 His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide
 For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,
 Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
 And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
 That ends this strange eventful history,
 Is second childishness and mere oblivion,
 Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans every thing.

As You Like It.

IV. SIR WALTER RALEGH

In this also is the little World of man compared, and made more like the Universal (man being the measure of all things; *Homo est mensura omnium rerum*, saith *Aristotle* and *Pythagoras*) in that the four Complexions resemble the four Elements, and the seven Ages of man, the seven Planets: Whereof our Infancy is compared to the Moon, in which we seem only to live and grow, as Plants; the second Age to Mercury, wherein we are taught and instructed; our third Age to Venus, the days of love, desire and vanity; the fourth to the Sun, the strong flourishing and beautiful age of man's life; the fifth to Mars, in which we seek honour and victory, and in which our thoughts travail to ambitious ends; the sixth Age is ascribed to Jupiter, in which we begin to take account of our times, judge of ourselves, and grow to the perfection of our understanding; the last and seventh to Saturn, wherein our days are sad and overcast, and in which we find by dear and lamentable experience, and by the loss which can never be repaired, that of all our vain passions and affections past, the sorrow only abideth.

History of the World, book i, chapter 2, section v.

V. SIR WALTER RALEGH

It is therefore Death alone that can suddenly make man to know himself. He tells the proud and insolent, that they are but Objects, and humbles them at the instant; makes them cry, complain, and repent, yea, even to hate their forepassed happiness.



‘THEN A SOLDIER’

St George

Dürer



'LAST SCENE OF ALL'
Drawing of an Old Man
Dürer

He takes the account of the rich, and proves him a beggar; a naked beggar, which hath interest in nothing but in the gravel that fills his mouth. He holds a Glass before the eyes of the most beautiful, and makes them see therein, their deformity and rottenness; and they acknowledge it.

O eloquent, just and mighty Death! whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none have dared, thou hast done; and whom all the world hath flattered, thou only hast cast out of the world and despised: Thou hast drawn together all the farstretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of man, and covered it all over with these two narrow words, *Hic jacet*.

History of the World, conclusion.

VI. SIR WALTER RALEGH

THE AUTHOR'S EPITAPH MADE BY HIMSELF

Even such is Time, which takes in trust
Our Youth, and Joys, our all we have,
And pays us but with age and dust,
Which in the dark and silent grave,
When we have wandered all our ways,
Shuts up the story of our days:
But from this Earth, and Grave, and Dust,
The Lord shall raise me up, I trust.

EDGAR ALLAN POE

EDGAR ALLAN POE (1809-49), a great American writer, was born at Boston. Part of his boyhood was spent in England, and he attended a school in the north of London. His career as a student at the university of Virginia and as a cadet at the West Point Military Academy was unsuccessful owing to his dissipated habits. He published his first poems at the age of eighteen, and added to them at intervals. His best known verses are *Annabel Lee*, *The Haunted Palace*, *The Bells* and *The Raven*. More widely known are his many tales—some very horrible and some very fine in their wild imaginative way. He wrote three of the earliest and best detective stories (*The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, *The Mystery of Marie Roget* and *The Purloined Letter*),

and the following tale—one of the first of “buried treasure” stories. Much of his life was passed in misery and poverty, due partly to bad luck and partly to his intemperate habits.

THE GOLD-BUG

What ho! what ho! this fellow is dancing mad!
He hath been bitten by the Tarantula.

—*All in the Wrong.*

Many years ago, I contracted an intimacy with a Mr William Legrand. He was of an ancient Huguenot family, and had once been wealthy; but a series of misfortunes had reduced him to want. To avoid the mortification consequent upon his disasters, he left New Orleans, the city of his forefathers, and took up his residence at Sullivan’s Island, near Charleston, South Carolina.

This island is a very singular one. It consists of little else than the sea sand, and is about three miles long. Its breadth at no point exceeds a quarter of a mile. It is separated from the mainland by a scarcely perceptible creek, oozing its way through a wilderness of reeds and slime, a favourite resort of the marsh-hen. The vegetation, as might be supposed, is scant, or at least dwarfish. No trees of any magnitude are to be seen. Near the western extremity, where Fort Moultrie stands, and where are some miserable frame buildings, tenanted, during summer, by the fugitives from Charleston dust and fever, may be found, indeed, the bristly palmetto; but the whole island, with the exception of this western point, and a line of hard, white beach on the sea-coast, is covered with a dense undergrowth of the sweet myrtle so much prized by the horticulturists of England. The shrub here often attains the height of fifteen or twenty feet, and forms an almost impenetrable coppice, burthening the air with its fragrance.

In the inmost recesses of this coppice, not far from the eastern or more remote end of the island, Legrand had built himself a small hut, which he occupied when I first, by mere accident, made his acquaintance. This soon ripened into friendship—for there was much in the recluse to excite interest and esteem. I found him well educated, with unusual powers of mind, but infected with misanthropy, and subject to perverse moods of alternate enthusiasm and melancholy. He had with him many books, but rarely employed them. His chief amusements were gunning and fishing, or sauntering along the beach and through the myrtles, in

quest of shells or entomological specimens—his collection of the latter might have been envied by a Swammerdam. In these excursions he was usually accompanied by an old negro, called Jupiter, who had been manumitted before the reverses of the family, but who could be induced, neither by threats nor by promises, to abandon what he considered his right of attendance upon the footsteps of his young “Massa Will.” It is not improbable that the relatives of Legrand, conceiving him to be somewhat unsettled in intellect, had contrived to instil this obstinacy into Jupiter, with a view to the supervision and guardianship of the wanderer.

The winters in the latitude of Sullivan’s Island are seldom very severe, and in the fall of the year it is a rare event indeed when a fire is considered necessary. About the middle of October, 18—, there occurred, however, a day of remarkable chilliness. Just before sunset I scrambled my way through the evergreens to the hut of my friend, whom I had not visited for several weeks—my residence being, at that time, in Charleston, a distance of nine miles from the island, while the facilities of passage and re-passage were very far behind those of the present day. Upon reaching the hut I rapped, as was my custom, and getting no reply, sought for the key where I knew it was secreted, unlocked the door, and went in. A fine fire was blazing upon the hearth. It was a novelty, and by no means an ungrateful one. I threw off an overcoat, took an arm-chair by the crackling logs, and awaited patiently the arrival of my hosts.

Soon after dark they arrived, and gave me a most cordial welcome. Jupiter, grinning from ear to ear, bustled about to prepare some marsh-hens for supper. Legrand was in one of his fits—how else shall I term them?—of enthusiasm. He had found an unknown bivalve, forming a new genus, and, more than this, he had hunted down and secured, with Jupiter’s assistance, a *scarabæus* which he believed to be totally new, but in respect to which he wished to have my opinion on the morrow.

“And why not to-night?” I asked, rubbing my hands over the blaze, and wishing the whole tribe of *scarabæi* at the devil.

“Ah, if I had only known you were here!” said Legrand, “but it’s so long since I saw you; and how could I foresee that you would pay me a visit this very night of all others? As I was coming home

I met Lieutenant G——, from the fort, and, very foolishly, I lent him the bug; so it will be impossible for you to see it until the morning. Stay here to-night, and I will send Jup down for it at sunrise. It is the loveliest thing in creation!”

“What?—sunrise?”

“Nonsense! no!—the bug. It is of a brilliant gold colour—about the size of a large hickory-nut—with two jet black spots near one extremity of the back, and another, somewhat longer, at the other. The *antennæ* are—”

“Dey aint *no* tin in him, Massa Will, I keep a tellin’ on you,” here interrupted Jupiter; “de bug is a goole-bug, solid, ebbery bit of him, inside and all, sep him wing—neber feel half so hebbly a bug in my life.”

“Well, suppose it is, Jup,” replied Legrand, somewhat more earnestly, it seemed to me, than the case demanded; “is that any reason for your letting the birds burn? The colour”—here he turned to me—“is really almost enough to warrant Jupiter’s idea. You never saw a more brilliant metallic lustre than the scales emit—but of this you cannot judge till to-morrow. In the meantime I can give you some idea of the shape.” Saying this, he seated himself at a small table, on which were a pen and ink, but no paper. He looked for some in a drawer, but found none.

“Never mind,” he said at length, “this will answer”; and he drew from his waistcoat pocket a scrap of what I took to be very dirty foolscap, and made upon it a rough drawing with the pen. While he did this, I retained my seat by the fire, for I was still chilly. When the design was complete, he handed it to me without rising. As I received it, a loud growl was heard, succeeded by scratching at the door. Jupiter opened it, and a large Newfoundland, belonging to Legrand, rushed in, leaped upon my shoulders, and loaded me with caresses; for I had shown him much attention during previous visits. When his gambols were over, I looked at the paper, and, to speak the truth, found myself not a little puzzled at what my friend had depicted.

“Well!” I said, after contemplating it for some minutes, “this *is* a strange *scarabæus*, I must confess; new to me; never saw any thing like it before—unless it was a skull, or a death’s-head, which it more nearly resembles than anything else that has come under my observation.”

"A death's-head!" echoed Legrand. "Oh—yes—well, it has something of that appearance upon paper, no doubt. The two upper black spots look like eyes, eh? and the longer one at the bottom like a mouth—and then the shape of the whole is oval."

"Perhaps so," said I; "but, Legrand, I fear you are no artist. I must wait until I see the beetle itself, if I am to form any idea of its personal appearance."

"Well, I don't know," said he a little nettled, "I draw tolerably—*should* do it at least—have had good masters, and flatter myself that I am not quite a blockhead."

"But, my dear fellow, you are joking then," said I, "this is a very passable *skull*—indeed, I may say that it is a very *excellent* skull, according to the vulgar notions about such specimens of physiology—and your *scarabæus* must be the queerest *scarabæus* in the world if it resembles it. Why, we may get up a very thrilling bit of superstition upon this hint. I presume you will call the bug *scarabæus caput hominis*, or something of that kind—there are many similar titles in the Natural Histories. But where are the *antennæ* you spoke of?"

"The *antennæ*!" said Legrand, who seemed to be getting unaccountably warm upon the subject; "I am sure you must see the *antennæ*. I made them as distinct as they are in the original insect, and I presume that is sufficient."

"Well, well," I said, "perhaps you have—still I don't see them"; and I handed him the paper without additional remark, not wishing to ruffle his temper; but I was much surprised at the turn affairs had taken; his ill humour puzzled me—and, as for the drawing of the beetle, there were positively *no antennæ* visible, and the whole *did* bear a very close resemblance to the ordinary cuts of a death's-head.

He received the paper very peevishly, and was about to crumple it, apparently to throw it in the fire, when a casual glance at the design seemed suddenly to rivet his attention. In an instant his face grew violently red—in another as excessively pale. For some minutes he continued to scrutinize the drawing minutely where he sat. At length he arose, took a candle from the table, and proceeded to seat himself upon a sea-chest in the furthest corner of the room. Here again he made an anxious examination of the paper; turning it in all directions. He said nothing, however, and

his conduct greatly astonished me; yet I thought it prudent not to exacerbate the growing moodiness of his temper by any comment. Presently he took from his coat-pocket a wallet, placed the paper carefully in it, and deposited both in a writing desk, which he locked. He now grew more composed in his demeanour; but his original air of enthusiasm had quite disappeared. Yet he seemed not so much sulky as abstracted. As the evening wore away he became more and more absorbed in reverie, from which no sallies of mine could arouse him. It had been my intention to pass the night at the hut, as I had frequently done before, but, seeing my host in this mood, I deemed it proper to take leave. He did not press me to remain, but, as I departed, he shook my hand with even more than his usual cordiality.

It was about a month after this (and during the interval I had seen nothing of Legrand) when I received a visit at Charleston, from his man, Jupiter. I had never seen the good old negro look so dispirited, and I feared that some serious disaster had befallen my friend.

"Well, Jup," said I, "what is the matter now?—how is your master?"

"Why, to speak de troof, massa, him not so berry well as mought be."

"Not well! I am truly sorry to hear it. What does he complain of?"

"Dar! dat's it!—he neber 'plain of notin'—but him berry sick for all dat."

"*Very* sick, Jupiter!—why didn't you say so at once? Is he confined to bed?"

"No, dat he aint!—he aint 'fin'd nowhar—dat's just whar deshoe pinch—my mind is got to be berry hebby 'bout poor Massa Will."

"Jupiter, I should like to understand what it is you are talking about. You say your master is sick. Hasn't he told you what ails him?"

"Why, massa, 'taint worf while for to git mad about de matter—Massa Will say noffin at all aint de matter wid him—but den what make him go about looking dis here way, wid he head down and he soldiers up, and as white as a gose? And den he keep a syphon all de time—"

"Keeps a what, Jupiter?"

"Keeps a syphon wid de figgurs on de slate—de queerest figgurs I ebber did see. Ise gettin' to be skeered, I tell you. Hab for to keep mighty tight eye 'pon him noovers. Todder day he gib me slip 'fore de sun up and was gone de whole ob de blessed day. I had a big stick ready cut for to gib him d——d good beating when he did come—but Ise sich a fool dat I hadn't de heart arter all—he looked so berry poorly."

"Eh?—what?—ah yes!—upon the whole I think you had better not be too severe with the poor fellow—don't flog him, Jupiter—he can't very well stand it—but can you form no idea of what has occasioned this illness, or rather this change of conduct? Has any thing unpleasant happened since I saw you?"

"No, massa, dey aint bin noffin onpleasant *since* den—'t was 'fore den I'm feared—'t was de berry day you was dare."

"How? what do you mean?"

"Why, massa, I mean de bug—dare now."

"The what?"

"De bug—I'm berry sartain dat Massa Will bin bit somewhere 'bout de head by dat goole-bug."

"And what cause have you, Jupiter, for such a supposition?"

"Claws enuff, massa, and mouff too. I nebber did see sich a d——d bug—he kick and he bite ebery ting what cum near him. Massa Will cotch him fuss, but had for to let him go 'gin mighty quick, I tell you—den was de time he must ha' got de bite. I didn't like de look ob de bug mouff, myself, nohow, so I wouldn't take hold ob him wid my finger, but I cotch him wid a piece ob paper dat I found. I rap him up in de paper and stuff a piece of it in he mouff—dat was de way."

"And you think, then, that your master was really bitten by the beetle, and that the bite made him sick?"

"I don't tink noffin' about it—I nose it. What make him dream 'bout de goole so much, if 'taint cause he bit by the goole-bug? Ise heerd 'bout dem goole-bugs 'fore dis."

"But how do you know he dreams about gold?"

"How I know? why, 'cause he talk about it in he sleep—dat's how I nose."

"Well, Jup, perhaps you are right; but to what fortunate circumstance am I to attribute the honour of a visit from you to-day?"

"What de matter, massa?"

"Did you bring any message from Mr Legrand?"

"No, massa, I bring dis here pissel"; and here Jupiter handed me a note which ran thus:

"MY DEAR——

"Why have I not seen you for so long a time? I hope you have not been so foolish as to take offence at any little *brusquerie* of mine; but no, that is improbable.

"Since I saw you I have had great cause for anxiety. I have something to tell you, yet scarcely know how to tell it, or whether I should tell it at all.

"I have not been quite well for some days past, and poor old Jup annoys me, almost beyond endurance, by his well-meant attentions. Would you believe it?—he had prepared a huge stick, the other day, with which to chastise me for giving him the slip, and spending the day, *solus*, among the hills on the main land. I verily believe that my ill looks alone saved me a flogging.

"I have made no addition to my cabinet since we met.

"If you can, in any way, make it convenient, come over with Jupiter. *Do* come. I wish to see you *to-night*, upon business of importance. I assure you that it is of the *highest* importance.

"Ever yours,

"WILLIAM LEGRAND."

There was something in the tone of this note which gave me great uneasiness. Its whole style differed materially from that of Legrand. What could he be dreaming of? What new crotchet possessed his excitable brain? What "business of the highest importance" could *he* possibly have to transact? Jupiter's account of him boded no good. I dreaded lest the continued pressure of misfortune had, at length, fairly unsettled the reason of my friend. Without a moment's hesitation, therefore, I prepared to accompany the negro.

Upon reaching the wharf, I noticed a scythe and three spades, all apparently new, lying in the bottom of the boat in which we were to embark.

"What is the meaning of all this, Jup?" I inquired.

"Him syfe, massa, and spade."

"Very true; but what are they doing here?"

"Him de syfe and de spade what Massa Will sis 'pon my buying

for him in de town, and de debbil's own lot of money I had to gib for 'em."

"But what, in the name of all that is mysterious, is your 'Massa Will' going to do with scythes and spades?"

"Dat's more dan *I* know, and debbil take me if I don't b'lieve 'tis more dan he know too. But it's all cum ob de bug."

Finding that no satisfaction was to be obtained of Jupiter, whose whole intellect seemed to be absorbed by "de bug," I now stepped into the boat, and made sail. With a fair and strong breeze we soon ran into the little cove to the northward of Fort Moultrie, and a walk of some two miles brought us to the hut. It was about three in the afternoon when we arrived. Legrand had been awaiting us in eager expectation. He grasped my hand with a nervous *empressment* which alarmed me and strengthened the suspicions already entertained. His countenance was pale even to ghastliness, and his deep-set eyes glared with unnatural lustre. After some inquiries respecting his health, I asked him, not knowing what better to say, if he had yet obtained the *scarabæus* from Lieutenant G——.

"Oh, yes," he replied, colouring violently, "I got it from him the next morning. Nothing should tempt me to part with that *scarabæus*. Do you know that Jupiter is quite right about it?"

"In what way," I asked, with a sad foreboding at heart.

"In supposing it to be a bug of *real gold*." He said this with an air of profound seriousness, and I felt inexpressibly shocked.

"This bug is to make my fortune," he continued, with a triumphant smile; "to reinstate me in my family possessions. Is it any wonder, then, that I prize it? Since Fortune has thought fit to bestow it upon me, I have only to use it properly, and I shall arrive at the gold of which it is the index. Jupiter, bring me that *scarabæus*!"

"What! de bug, massa? I'd rudder not go fer trubble dat bug; you mus' git him for your own self." Hereupon Legrand arose, with a grave and stately air, and brought me the beetle from a glass case in which it was enclosed. It was a beautiful *scarabæus*, and, at that time, unknown to naturalists—of course a great prize in a scientific point of view. There were two round black spots near one extremity of the back, and a long one near the other. The scales were exceedingly hard and glossy, with all the

appearance of burnished gold. The weight of the insect was very remarkable, and, taking all things into consideration, I could hardly blame Jupiter for his opinion respecting it; but what to make of Legrand's agreement with that opinion, I could not, for the life of me, tell.

"I sent for you," said he, in a grandiloquent tone, when I had completed my examination of the beetle, "I sent for you that I might have your counsel and assistance in furthering the views of Fate and of the bug—"

"My dear Legrand," I cried, interrupting him, "you are certainly unwell, and had better use some little precautions. You shall go to bed, and I will remain with you a few days, until you get over this. You are feverish and—"

"Feel my pulse," said he.

I felt it, and to say the truth, found not the slightest indication of fever.

"But you may be ill and yet have no fever. Allow me this once to prescribe for you. In the first place go to bed. In the next—"

"You are mistaken," he interposed, "I am as well as I can expect to be under the excitement which I suffer. If you really wish me well, you will relieve this excitement."

"And how is this to be done?"

"Verily easily. Jupiter and myself are going upon an expedition into the hills, upon the main land, and, in this expedition, we shall need the aid of some person in whom we can confide. You are the only one we can trust. Whether we succeed or fail, the excitement which you now perceive in me will be equally allayed."

"I am anxious to oblige you in any way," I replied; "but do you mean to say that this infernal beetle has any connection with your expedition into the hills?"

"It has."

"Then, Legrand, I can become a party to no such absurd proceeding."

"I am sorry—very sorry—for we shall have to try it by ourselves."

"Try it by yourselves! The man is surely mad!—but stay!—how long do you propose to be absent?"

"Probably all night. We shall start immediately, and be back, at all events, by sunrise."

"And you will promise me, upon your honour, that when this freak of yours is over, and the bug business (good God!) settled to your satisfaction, you will then return home and follow my advice implicitly, as that of your physician."

"Yes; I promise; and now let us be off, for we have no time to lose."

With a heavy heart I accompanied my friend. We started about four o'clock—Legrand, Jupiter, the dog, and myself. Jupiter had with him the scythe and spades—the whole of which he insisted upon carrying—more through fear, it seemed to me, of trusting either of the implements within reach of his master, than from any excess of industry or complaisance. His demeanour was dogged in the extreme, and "dat d——d bug" were the sole words which escaped his lips during the journey. For my own part, I had charge of a couple of dark lanterns, while Legrand contented himself with the *scarabæus*, which he carried attached to the end of a bit of whip-cord; twirling it to and fro, with the air of a conjuror, as he went. When I observed this last, plain evidence of my friend's aberration of mind, I could scarcely refrain from tears. I thought it best, however, to humour his fancy, at least for the present, or until I could adopt some more energetic measures with a chance of success. In the meantime, I endeavoured, but all in vain, to sound him in regard to the object of the expedition. Having succeeded in inducing me to accompany him, he seemed unwilling to hold conversation upon any topic of minor importance, and to all my questions vouchsafed no other reply than "we shall see!"

We crossed the creek at the head of the island by means of a skiff, and, ascending the high grounds on the shore of the main land, proceeded in a northwesterly direction, through a tract of country excessively wild and desolate, where no trace of a human footstep was to be seen. Legrand led the way with decision; pausing only for an instant, here and there, to consult what appeared to be certain landmarks of his own contrivance upon a former occasion.

In this manner we journeyed for about two hours, and the sun was just setting when we entered a region infinitely more dreary than any yet seen. It was a species of tableland, near the summit of an almost inaccessible hill, densely wooded from base to pinnacle,

and interspersed with huge crags that appeared to lie loosely upon the soil, and in many cases were prevented from precipitating themselves into the valleys below, merely by the support of the trees against which they reclined. Deep ravines, in various directions, gave an air of still sterner solemnity to the scene.

The natural platform to which we had clambered was thickly overgrown with brambles, through which we soon discovered that it would have been impossible to force our way but for the scythe; and Jupiter, by direction of his master, proceeded to clear for us a path to the foot of an enormously tall tulip-tree, which stood, with some eight or ten oaks, upon the level, and far surpassed them all, and all other trees which I had then ever seen, in the beauty of its foliage and form, in the wide spread of its branches, and in the general majesty of its appearance. When we reached this tree, Legrand turned to Jupiter, and asked him if he thought he could climb it. The old man seemed a little staggered by the question, and for some moments made no reply. At length he approached the huge trunk, walked slowly around it, and examined it with minute attention. When he had completed his scrutiny, he merely said,

"Yes, massa, Jup climb any tree he ebber see in he life."

"Then up with you as soon as possible, for it will soon be too dark to see what we are about."

"How far mus go up, massa?" inquired Jupiter.

"Get up the main trunk first, and then I will tell you which way to go—and here—stop! take this beetle with you."

"De bug, Massa Will!—de goole-bug!" cried the negro, drawing back in dismay—"what for mus tote de bug way up de tree?"

"If you are afraid, Jup, a great big negro like you, to take hold of a harmless little dead beetle, why you can carry it up by this string—but, if you do not take it up with you in some way, I shall be under the necessity of breaking your head with this shovel."

"What de matter now, massa?" said Jup, evidently shamed into compliance; "always want for to raise fuss wid old nigger. Was only funnin anyhow. *Me* feered de bug! what I keer for de bug?" Here he took cautiously hold of the extreme end of the string, and, maintaining the insect as far from his person as circumstances would permit, prepared to ascend the tree.

In youth, the tulip-tree, or *Liriodendron Tulipiferum*, the most magnificent of American foresters, has a trunk peculiarly smooth, and often rises to a great height without lateral branches; but, in its riper age, the bark becomes gnarled and uneven, while many short limbs make their appearance on the stem. Thus the difficulty of ascension, in the present case, lay more in semblance than in reality. Embracing the huge cylinder, as closely as possible, with his arms and knees, seizing with his hands some projections, and resting his naked toes upon others, Jupiter, after one or two narrow escapes from falling, at length wriggled himself into the first great fork, and seemed to consider the whole business as virtually accomplished. The *risk* of the achievement was, in fact, now over, although the climber was some sixty or seventy feet from the ground.

"Which way mus go now, Massa Will?" he asked.

"Keep up the largest branch—the one on this side," said Legrand. The negro obeyed him promptly, and apparently with but little trouble; ascending higher and higher, until no glimpse of his squat figure could be obtained through the dense foliage which enveloped it. Presently his voice was heard in a sort of halloo.

"How much fudder is got for go?"

"How high up are you?" asked Legrand.

"Ebbor so fur," replied the negro; "can see de sky fru de top ob de tree."

"Never mind the sky, but attend to what I say. Look down the trunk and count the limbs below you on this side. How many limbs have you passed?"

"One, two, tree, four, fibe—I done pass fibe big limb, massa, pon dis side."

"Then go one limb higher."

In a few minutes the voice was heard again, announcing that the seventh limb was attained.

"Now, Jup," cried Legrand, evidently much excited, "I want you to work your way out upon that limb as far as you can. If you see anything strange let me know."

By this time what little doubt I might have entertained of my poor friend's insanity was put finally at rest. I had no alternative but to conclude him stricken with lunacy, and I became seriously anxious about getting him home. While I was pondering upon what was best to be done, Jupiter's voice was again heard.

"Mos feerd for to ventue pon dis limb berry far—'tis dead limb putty much all de way."

"Did you say it was a *dead* limb, Jupiter?" cried Legrand in a quavering voice.

"Yes, massa, him dead as de door-nail—done up for sartin—done departed dis here life."

"What in the name of heaven shall I do?" asked Legrand, seemingly in the greatest distress.

"Do!" said I, glad of an opportunity to interpose a word, "why come home and go to bed. Come now!—that's a fine fellow. It's getting late, and, besides, you remember your promise."

"Jupiter," cried he, without heeding me in the least, "do you hear me?"

"Yes, Massa Will, hear you ebber so plain."

"Try the wood well, then, with your knife, and see if you think it *very* rotten."

"Him rotten, massa, sure nuff," replied the negro in a few moments, "but not so berry rotten as mought be. Mought venture out leetle way pon de limb by myself, dat's true."

"By yourself!—what do you mean?"

"Why, I mean de bug. 'Tis *berry* hebby bug. S'pose I drop him down fuss, and den de limb won't break wid just de weight ob one nigger."

"You infernal scoundrel!" cried Legrand, apparently much relieved, "what do you mean by telling me such nonsense as that? As sure as you let that beetle fall!—I'll break your neck. Look here, Jupiter, do you hear me?"

"Yes, massa, needn't hollo at poor nigger dat style."

"Well! now listen!—if you will venture out on the limb as far as you think safe, and not let go the beetle, I'll make you a present of a silver dollar as soon as you get down."

"I'm gwine, Massa Will—deed I is," replied the negro very promptly—"mos out to the eend now."

"*Out to the end!*" here fairly screamed Legrand; "do you say you are out to the end of that limb?"

"Soon be to de eend massa—o-o-o-o-oh! Lor-gol-a-marcy! what *is* dis here pon de tree?"

"Well!" cried Legrand, highly delighted, "what is it?"

"Why taint noffin but a skull—somebody bin lef him head up de tree, and de crows done gobble ebery bit of de meat off."

"A skull, you say!—very well,—how is it fastened to the limb?—what holds it on?"

"Sure nuff massa; mus look. Why dis berry curious sarcumstance, pon my word—dare's a great big nail in de skull, what fastens ob it on to de tree."

"Well now, Jupiter, do exactly as I tell you—do you hear?"

"Yes, massa."

"Pay attention, then—find the left eye of the skull."

"Hum! hoo! dat's good! why dar ain't no eye lef at all."

"Curse your stupidity! Do you know your right hand from your left?"

"Yes, I knows dat—knows all bout dat—'tis my lef hand what I chops de wood wid."

"To be sure! you are left-handed; and your left eye is on the same side as your left hand. Now, I suppose, you can find the left eye of the skull, or the place where the left eye has been. Have you found it?"

Here was a long pause. At length the negro asked:

"Is de lef eye of de skull pon de same side as de lef hand side of de skull too?—cause de skull ain't got not a bit ob a hand at all—nebber mind! I got de lef eye now—here de lef eye! what mus do wid it?"

"Let the beetle drop through it, as far as the string will reach—but be careful and not let go your hold of the string."

"All dat done, Massa Will; mighty easy ting for to put de bug fru de hole—look out for him dar below!"

During this colloquy no portion of Jupiter's person could be seen; but the beetle, which he had suffered to descend, was now visible at the end of the string, and glistened, like a globe of burnished gold, in the last rays of the setting sun, some of which still faintly illumined the eminence upon which we stood. The *scarabæus* hung quite clear of any branches, and, if allowed to fall, would have fallen at our feet. Legrand immediately took the scythe, and cleared with it a circular space, three or four yards in diameter, just beneath the insect, and, having accomplished this, ordered Jupiter to let go the string and come down from the tree.

Driving a peg, with great nicety, into the ground, at the precise

spot where the beetle fell, my friend now produced from his pocket a tape-measure. Fastening one end of this at that point of the trunk of the tree which was nearest the peg, he unrolled it till it reached the peg and thence further unrolled it, in the direction already established by the two points of the tree and the peg, for the distance of fifty feet—Jupiter clearing away the brambles with the scythe. At the spot thus attained a second peg was driven, and about this, as a centre, a rude circle, about four feet in diameter, described. Taking now a spade himself, and giving one to Jupiter and one to me, Legrand begged us to set about digging as quickly as possible.

To speak the truth, I had no especial relish for such amusement at any time, and, at that particular moment, would most willingly have declined it; for the night was coming on, and I felt much fatigued with the exercise already taken; but I saw no mode of escape, and was fearful of disturbing my poor friend's equanimity by a refusal. Could I have depended, indeed, upon Jupiter's aid, I would have had no hesitation in attempting to get the lunatic home by force; but I was too well assured of the old negro's disposition, to hope that he would assist me, under any circumstances, in a personal contest with his master. I made no doubt that the latter had been infected with some of the innumerable Southern superstitions about money buried, and that his phantasy had received confirmation by the finding of the *scarabæus*, or, perhaps, by Jupiter's obstinacy in maintaining it to be "a bug of real gold." A mind disposed to lunacy would readily be led away by such suggestions—especially if chiming in with favourite preconceived ideas—and then I called to mind the poor fellow's speech about the beetle's being "the index of his fortune." Upon the whole, I was sadly vexed and puzzled, but, at length, I concluded to make a virtue of necessity—to dig with a good will, and thus the sooner to convince the visionary, by ocular demonstration, of the fallacy of the opinions he entertained.

The lanterns having been lit, we all fell to work with a zeal worthy a more rational cause; and, as the glare fell upon our persons and implements, I could not help thinking how picturesque a group we composed, and how strange and suspicious our labours must have appeared to any interloper who, by chance, might have stumbled upon our whereabouts.

We dug very steadily for two hours. Little was said; and our chief embarrassment lay in the yelpings of the dog, who took exceeding interest in our proceedings. He, at length, became so obstreperous that we grew fearful of his giving the alarm to some stragglers in the vicinity;—or, rather, this was the apprehension of Legrand;—for myself, I should have rejoiced at any interruption which might have enabled me to get the wanderer home. The noise was, at length, very effectually silenced by Jupiter, who, getting out of the hole with a dogged air of deliberation, tied the brute's mouth up with one of his suspenders, and then returned, with a grave chuckle, to his task.

When the time mentioned had expired, we had reached a depth of five feet, and yet no signs of any treasure became manifest. A general pause ensued, and I began to hope that the farce was at an end. Legrand, however, although evidently much disconcerted, wiped his brow thoughtfully and recommenced. We had excavated the entire circle of four feet diameter, and now we slightly enlarged the limit, and went to the farther depth of two feet. Still nothing appeared. The gold-seeker, whom I sincerely pitied, at length clambered from the pit, with the bitterest disappointment imprinted upon every feature, and proceeded, slowly and reluctantly, to put on his coat, which he had thrown off at the beginning of his labour. In the meantime I made no remark. Jupiter, at a signal from his master, began to gather up his tools. This done, and the dog having been unmuzzled, we turned in profound silence toward home.

We had taken, perhaps, a dozen steps in this direction, when, with a loud oath, Legrand strode up to Jupiter, and seized him by the collar. The astonished negro opened his eyes and mouth to the fullest extent, let fall the spades, and fell upon his knees.

“You scoundrel!” said Legrand, hissing out the syllables from between his clenched teeth—“you infernal black villain!—speak, I tell you!—answer me this instant, without prevarication!—which—which is your left eye?”

“Oh, my golly, Massa Will! aint dis here my lef eye for sartain?” roared the terrified Jupiter, placing his hand upon his *right* organ of vision, and holding it there with a desperate pertinacity, as if in immediate dread of his master's attempt at a gouge.

“I thought so!—I knew it!—hurrah!” vociferated Legrand,

letting the negro go and executing a series of curvets and caracols, much to the astonishment of his valet, who, arising from his knees, looked, mutely, from his master to myself, and then from myself to his master.

"Come! we must go back," said the latter, "the game's not up yet"; and he again led the way to the tulip-tree.

"Jupiter," said he, when we reached its foot, "come here! was the skull nailed to the limb with the face outward, or with the face to the limb?"

"De face was out, massa, so dat de crows could get at de eyes good, widout any trouble."

"Well, then, was it this eye or that through which you let fall the beetle?"—here Legrand touched each of Jupiter's eyes.

"'Twas dis eye, massa—de lef eye—jis as you tell me,"—and here it was his right eye that the negro indicated.

"That will do—we must try it again."

Here my friend, about whose madness I now saw, or fancied that I saw, certain indications of method, removed the peg which marked the spot where the beetle fell, to a spot about three inches to the westward of its former position. Taking, now, the tape measure from the nearest point of the trunk to the peg, as before, and continuing the extension in a straight line to the distance of fifty feet, a spot was indicated, removed, by several yards, from the point at which we had been digging.

Around the new position a circle, somewhat larger than in the former instance, was now described, and we again set to work with the spades. I was dreadfully weary, but, scarcely understanding what had occasioned the change in my thoughts, I felt no longer any great aversion from the labour imposed. I had become most unaccountably interested—nay, even excited. Perhaps there was something, amid all the extravagant demeanour of Legrand—some air of forethought, or of deliberation, which impressed me. I dug eagerly, and now and then caught myself actually looking, with something that very much resembled expectation, for the fancied treasure, the vision of which had demented my unfortunate companion. At a period when such vagaries of thought most fully possessed me, and when we had been at work perhaps an hour and a half, we were again interrupted by the violent howlings of the dog. His uneasiness, in the first instance, had been, evi-

dently, but the result of playfulness or caprice, but he now assumed a bitter and serious tone. Upon Jupiter's again attempting to muzzle him, he made furious resistance, and, leaping into the hole, tore up the mould frantically with his claws. In a few seconds he had uncovered a mass of human bones, forming two complete skeletons, intermingled with several buttons of metal, and what appeared to be the dust of decayed woollen. One or two strokes of a spade upturned the blade of a large Spanish knife, and, as we dug farther, three or four loose pieces of gold and silver coin came to light.

At sight of these the joy of Jupiter could scarcely be restrained, but the countenance of his master wore an air of extreme disappointment. He urged us, however, to continue our exertions, and the words were hardly uttered when I stumbled and fell forward, having caught the toe of my boot in a large ring of iron that lay half buried in the loose earth.

We now worked in earnest, and never did I pass ten minutes of more intense excitement. During this interval we had fairly unearthed an oblong chest of wood, which, from its perfect preservation and wonderful hardness, had plainly been subjected to some mineralizing process—perhaps that of the bi-chloride of mercury. This box was three feet and a half long, three feet broad, and two and a half feet deep. It was firmly secured by bands of wrought iron, riveted, and forming a kind of trellis-work over the whole. On each side of the chest, near the top, were three rings of iron—six in all—by means of which a firm hold could be obtained by six persons. Our utmost united endeavours served only to disturb the coffer very slightly in its bed. We at once saw the impossibility of removing so great a weight. Luckily, the sole fastenings of the lid consisted of two sliding bolts. These we drew back—trembling and panting with anxiety. In an instant, a treasure of incalculable value lay gleaming before us. As the rays of the lanterns fell within the pit, there flashed upwards, from a confused heap of gold and of jewels, a glow and a glare that absolutely dazzled our eyes.

I shall not pretend to describe the feelings with which I gazed. Amazement was, of course, predominant. Legrand appeared exhausted with excitement, and spoke very few words. Jupiter's countenance wore, for some minutes, as deadly a pallor as it is

possible, in the nature of things, for any negro's visage to assume. He seemed stupefied—thunderstricken. Presently he fell upon his knees in the pit, and burying his naked arms up to the elbows in gold, let them there remain, as if enjoying the luxury of a bath. At length, with a deep sigh, he exclaimed, as if in a soliloquy:

“And dis all cum ob de goole-bug! de putty goole-bug! de poor little goole-bug, what I boosed in dat sabage kind ob style! Aint you shamed ob yourself, nigger?—answer me dat!”

It became necessary, at last, that I should arouse both master and valet to the expediency of removing the treasure. It was growing late, and it behooved us to make exertion, that we might get every thing housed before daylight. It was difficult to say what should be done; and much time was spent in deliberation—so confused were the ideas of all. We, finally, lightened the box by removing two-thirds of its contents, when we were enabled, with some trouble, to raise it from the hole. The articles taken out were deposited among the brambles, and the dog left to guard them, with strict orders from Jupiter neither, upon any pretence, to stir from the spot, nor to open his mouth until our return. We then hurriedly made for home with the chest; reaching the hut in safety, but after excessive toil, at one o'clock in the morning. Worn out as we were, it was not in human nature to do more just then. We rested until two, and had supper; starting for the hills immediately afterward, armed with three stout sacks, which, by good luck, were upon the premises. A little before four we arrived at the pit, divided the remainder of the booty, as equally as might be, among us, and, leaving the holes unfilled, again set out for the hut, at which, for the second time, we deposited our golden burthens, just as the first streaks of the dawn gleamed from over the tree-tops in the East.

We were now thoroughly broken down; but the intense excitement of the time denied us repose. After an unquiet slumber of some three or four hours' duration, we arose, as if by preconcert, to make examination of our treasure.

The chest had been full to the brim, and we spent the whole day, and the greater part of the next night, in a scrutiny of its contents. There had been nothing like order or arrangement. Every thing had been heaped in promiscuously. Having assorted all with care, we found ourselves possessed of even vaster wealth

than we had at first supposed. In coin there was rather more than four hundred and fifty thousand dollars—estimating the value of the pieces, as accurately as we could, by the tables of the period. There was not a particle of silver. All was gold of antique date and of great variety—French, Spanish, and German money, with a few English guineas, and some counters, of which we had never seen specimens before. There were several very large and heavy coins, so worn that we could make nothing of their inscriptions. There was no American money. The value of the jewels we found more difficulty in estimating. There were diamonds—some of them exceedingly large and fine—a hundred and ten in all, and not one of them small; eighteen rubies of remarkable brilliancy;—three hundred and ten emeralds, all very beautiful; and twenty-one sapphires, with an opal. These stones had all been broken from their settings and thrown loose in the chest. The settings themselves, which we picked out from among the other gold, appeared to have been beaten up with hammers, as if to prevent identification. Besides all this, there was a vast quantity of solid gold ornaments: nearly two hundred massive finger and ear-rings; rich chains—thirty of these, if I remember; eighty-three very large and heavy crucifixes; five gold censers of great value; a prodigious golden punch-bowl, ornamented with richly chased vine-leaves and Bacchanalian figures; with two sword-handles exquisitely embossed, and many other smaller articles which I cannot recollect. The weight of these valuables exceeded three hundred and fifty pounds avoirdupois; and in this estimate I have not included one hundred and ninety-seven superb gold watches; three of the number being worth each five hundred dollars, if one. Many of them were very old, and as timekeepers valueless; the works having suffered more or less, from corrosion—but all were richly jewelled and in cases of great worth. We estimated the entire contents of the chest, that night, at a million and a half of dollars; and upon the subsequent disposal of the trinkets and jewels (a few being retained for our own use), it was found that we had greatly under-valued the treasure.

When, at length, we had concluded our examination, and the intense excitement of the time had, in some measure, subsided, Legrand, who saw that I was dying with impatience for a solution

of this most extraordinary riddle, entered into a full detail of all the circumstances connected with it.

"You remember," said he, "the night when I handed you the rough sketch I had made of the *scarabæus*. You recollect also, that I became quite vexed at you for insisting that my drawing resembled a death's head. When you first made this assertion I thought you were jesting; but afterward I called to mind the peculiar spots on the back of the insect, and admitted to myself that your remark had some little foundation in fact. Still, the sneer at my graphic powers irritated me—for I am considered a good artist—and, therefore, when you handed me the scrap of parchment, I was about to crumple it up and throw it angrily into the fire."

"The scrap of paper, you mean," said I.

"No; it had much of the appearance of paper, and at first I supposed it to be such, but when I came to draw upon it, I discovered it at once to be a piece of very thin parchment. It was quite dirty, you remember. Well, as I was in the very act of crumpling it up, my glance fell upon the sketch at which you had been looking, and you may imagine my astonishment when I perceived, in fact, the figure of a death's head just where, it seemed to me, I had made the drawing of the beetle. For a moment I was too much amazed to think with accuracy. I knew that my design was very different in detail from this—although there was a certain similarity in general outline. Presently I took a candle, and seating myself at the other end of the room, proceeded to scrutinize the parchment more closely. Upon turning it over, I saw my own sketch upon the reverse, just as I had made it. My first idea, now, was mere surprise at the really remarkable similarity of outline—at the singular coincidence involved in the fact that, unknown to me, there should have been a skull upon the other side of the parchment, immediately beneath my figure of the *scarabæus*, and that this skull, not only in outline, but in size, should so closely resemble my drawing. I say the singularity of this coincidence absolutely stupefied me for a time. This is the usual effect of such coincidences. The mind struggles to establish a connection—a sequence of cause and effect—and, being unable to do so, suffers a species of temporary paralysis. But, when I recovered from this stupor, there dawned upon me gradually a

conviction which startled me even far more than the coincidence. I began distinctly, positively, to remember that there had been *no* drawing upon the parchment when I made my sketch of the *scarabæus*. I became perfectly certain of this; for I recollected turning up first one side and then the other, in search of the cleanest spot. Had the skull been then there, of course I could not have failed to notice it. Here was indeed a mystery which I felt it impossible to explain; but, even at that early moment, there seemed to glimmer, faintly, within the most remote and secret chambers of my intellect, a glow-worm-like conception of that truth which last night's adventure brought to so magnificent a demonstration. I arose at once, and putting the parchment securely away, dismissed all further reflection until I should be alone.

"When you had gone, and when Jupiter was fast asleep, I betook myself to a more methodical investigation of the affair. In the first place I considered the manner in which the parchment had come into my possession. The spot where we discovered the *scarabæus* was on the coast of the main land, about a mile eastward of the island, and but a short distance above high-water mark. Upon my taking hold of it, it gave me a sharp bite, which caused me to let it drop. Jupiter, with his accustomed caution, before seizing the insect, which had flown toward him, looked about him for a leaf, or something of that nature, by which to take hold of it. It was at this moment that his eyes, and mine also, fell upon the scrap of parchment, which I then supposed to be paper. It was lying half buried in the sand, a corner sticking up. Near the spot where we found it, I observed the remnants of the hull of what appeared to have been a ship's long-boat. The wreck seemed to have been there for a very great while; for the resemblance to boat timbers could scarcely be traced.

"Well, Jupiter picked up the parchment, wrapped the beetle in it, and gave it to me. Soon afterwards we turned to go home, and on the way met Lieutenant G——. I showed him the insect, and he begged me to let him take it to the fort. On my consenting, he thrust it forthwith into his waistcoat pocket, without the parchment in which it had been wrapped, and which I had continued to hold in my hand during his inspection. Perhaps he dreaded my changing my mind, and thought it best to make sure of the prize at once—you know how enthusiastic he is on all subjects

connected with Natural History. At the same time, without being conscious of it, I must have deposited the parchment in my own pocket.

"You remember that when I went to the table, for the purpose of making a sketch of the beetle, I found no paper where it was usually kept. I looked in the drawer, and found none there. I searched my pockets, hoping to find an old letter—and then my hand fell upon the parchment. I thus detail the precise mode in which it came into my possession; for the circumstances impressed me with peculiar force.

"No doubt you will think me fanciful—but I had already established a kind of *connection*. I had put together two links of a great chain. There was a boat lying on a sea-coast, and not far from the boat was a parchment—*not a paper*—with a skull depicted on it. You will, of course, ask 'where is the connection?' I reply that the skull, or death's head, is the well-known emblem of the pirate. The flag of the death's-head is hoisted in all engagements.

"I have said that the scrap was parchment, and not paper. Parchment is durable—almost imperishable. Matters of little moment are rarely consigned to parchment; since, for the mere ordinary purposes of drawing or writing, it is not nearly so well adapted as paper. This reflection suggested some meaning—some relevancy—in the death's-head. I did not fail to observe, also, the *form* of the parchment. Although one of its corners had been, by some accident, destroyed, it could be seen that the original form was oblong. It was just such a slip, indeed, as might have been chosen for a memorandum—for a record of something to be long remembered and carefully preserved."

"But," I interposed, "you say that the skull was *not* upon the parchment when you made the drawing of the beetle. How then do you trace any connection between the boat and the skull—since this latter, according to your own admission, must have been designed (God only knows how or by whom) at some period subsequent to your sketching the *scarabæus*?"

"Ah, hereupon turns the whole mystery; although the secret, at this point, I had comparatively little difficulty in solving. My steps were sure, and could afford but a single result. I reasoned, for example, thus: When I drew the *scarabæus*, there was no skull apparent on the parchment. When I had completed the

drawing, I gave it to you, and observed you narrowly until you returned it. *You*, therefore, did not design the skull, and no one else was present to do it. Then it was not done by human agency. And nevertheless it was done.

“At this stage of my reflections I endeavoured to remember, and *did* remember, with entire distinctness, every incident which occurred about the period in question. The weather was chilly (oh, rare and happy accident!), and a fire was blazing on the hearth. I was heated with exercise and sat near the table. You, however, had drawn a chair close to the chimney. Just as I had placed the parchment in your hand, and as you were in the act of inspecting it, Wolf, the Newfoundland, entered, and leaped upon your shoulders. With your left hand you caressed him and kept him off, while your right, holding the parchment, was permitted to fall listlessly between your knees, and in close proximity to the fire. At one moment I thought the blaze had caught it, and was about to caution you, but, before I could speak, you had withdrawn it, and were engaged in its examination. When I considered all these particulars, I doubted not for a moment that *heat* had been the agent in bringing to light, on the parchment, the skull which I saw designed on it. You are well aware that chemical preparations exist, and have existed time out of mind, by means of which it is possible to write on either paper or vellum, so that the characters shall become visible only when subjected to the action of fire. Zaffre, digested in *aqua regia*, and diluted with four times its weight of water, is sometimes employed; a green tint results. The regulus of cobalt, dissolved in spirit of nitre, gives a red. These colours disappear at longer or shorter intervals after the material written on cools, but again become apparent upon the re-application of heat.

“I now scrutinized the death’s-head with care. Its outer edges—the edges of the drawing nearest the edge of the vellum—were far more *distinct* than the others. It was clear that the action of the caloric had been imperfect or unequal. I immediately kindled a fire, and subjected every portion of the parchment to a glowing heat. At first, the only effect was the strengthening of the faint lines in the skull; but, on persevering in the experiment, there became visible, at the corner of the slip, diagonally opposite to the spot in which the death’s-head was delineated, the figure of

what I at first supposed to be a goat. A closer scrutiny, however, satisfied me that it was intended for a kid."

"Ha! ha!" said I, "to be sure I have no right to laugh at you—a million and a half of money is too serious a matter for mirth—but you are not about to establish a third link in your chain—you will not find any especial connection between your pirates and a goat—pirates, you know, have nothing to do with goats; they appertain to the farming interest."

"But I have just said that the figure was *not* that of a goat."

"Well, a kid then—pretty much the same thing."

"Pretty much, but not altogether," said Legrand. "You may have heard of one *Captain* Kidd. I at once looked on the figure of the animal as a kind of punning or hieroglyphical signature. I say signature; because its position on the vellum suggested this idea. The death's-head at the corner diagonally opposite, had, in the same manner, the air of a stamp, or seal. But I was sorely put out by the absence of all else—of the body to my imagined instrument—of the text for my context."

"I presume you expected to find a letter between the stamp and the signature."

"Something of that kind. The fact is, I felt irresistibly impressed with a presentiment of some vast good fortune impending. I can scarcely say why. Perhaps, after all, it was rather a desire than an actual belief;—but do you know that Jupiter's silly words, about the bug being of solid gold, had a remarkable effect on my fancy? And then the series of accidents and coincidences—these were so *very* extraordinary. Do you observe how mere an accident it was that these events should have occurred on the *sole* day of all the year in which it has been, or may be, sufficiently cool for fire, and that without the fire, or without the intervention of the dog at the precise moment in which he appeared, I should never have become aware of the death's-head, and so never the possessor of the treasure?"

"But proceed—I am all impatience."

"Well; you have heard, of course, the many stories current—the thousand vague rumours afloat about money buried, somewhere on the Atlantic coast, by Kidd and his associates. These rumours must have had some foundation in fact. And that the rumours have existed so long and so continuously could have

resulted, it appeared to me, only from the circumstance of the buried treasure still *remaining* entombed. Had Kidd concealed his plunder for a time, and afterward reclaimed it, the rumours would scarcely have reached us in their present unvarying form. You will observe that the stories told are all about money-seekers, not about money-finders. Had the pirate recovered his money, there the affair would have dropped. It seemed to me that some accident—say the loss of a memorandum indicating its locality—had deprived him of the means of recovering it, and that this accident had become known to his followers, who otherwise might never have heard that treasure had been concealed at all, and who, busying themselves in vain, because unguided, attempts to regain it, had given first birth, and then universal currency, to the reports which are now so common. Have you ever heard of any important treasure being unearthed along the coast?”

“Never.”

“But that Kidd’s accumulations were immense, is well known. I took it for granted, therefore, that the earth still held them; and you will scarcely be surprised when I tell you that I felt a hope, nearly amounting to certainty, that the parchment so strangely found involved a lost record of the place of deposit.”

“But how did you proceed?”

“I held the vellum again to the fire, after increasing the heat, but nothing appeared. I now thought it possible that the coating of dirt might have something to do with the failure: so I carefully rinsed the parchment by pouring warm water over it, and, having done this, I placed it in a tin pan, with the skull downwards, and put the pan upon a furnace of lighted charcoal. In a few minutes, the pan having become thoroughly heated, I removed the slip, and, to my inexpressible joy, found it spotted, in several places, with what appeared to be figures arranged in lines. Again I placed it in the pan, and suffered it to remain another minute. On taking it off, the whole was just as you see it now.”

Here Legrand, having re-heated the parchment, submitted it to my inspection. The following characters were rudely traced, in a red tint, between the death’s-head and the goat:

53†††305))6*;4826)4†.4†);806*;48†8¶(60))85;;]8*;:†*8†83(88)5*
†;46(;88*96*?;8)*†;(485);5*†2:*†;(4956*2(5*—4)8¶8*;4069285);)

6†8)4††;1(†9;48081;8:8†1;48†85;4)485†528806*81(†9;48;(88;4(†?
34;48)4†;161;;188;†?;

"But," said I, returning him the slip, "I am as much in the dark as ever. Were all the jewels of Golconda awaiting me on my solution of this enigma, I am quite sure that I should be unable to earn them."

"And yet," said Legrand, "the solution is by no means so difficult as you might be led to imagine from the first hasty inspection of the characters. These characters, as any one might readily guess, form a cipher—that is to say, they convey a meaning; but then from what is known of Kidd, I could not suppose him capable of constructing any of the more abstruse cryptographs. I made up my mind, at once, that this was of a simple species—such, however, as would appear, to the crude intellect of the sailor, absolutely insoluble without the key."

"And you really solved it?"

"Readily; I have solved others of an abstruseness ten thousand times greater. Circumstances, and a certain bias of mind, have led me to take interest in such riddles, and it may well be doubted whether human ingenuity can construct an enigma of the kind which human ingenuity may not, by proper application, resolve. In fact, having once established connected and legible characters, I scarcely gave a thought to the mere difficulty of developing their import.

"In the present case—indeed in all cases of secret writing—the first question regards the *language* of the cipher; for the principles of solution, so far, especially, as the more simple ciphers are concerned, depend on, and are varied by, the genius of the particular idiom. In general, there is no alternative but experiment (directed by probabilities) of every tongue known to him who attempts the solution, until the true one be attained. But, with the cipher now before us all difficulty is removed by the signature. The pun upon the word 'Kidd' is appreciable in no other language than the English. But for this consideration I should have begun my attempts with the Spanish and French, as the tongues in which a secret of this kind would most naturally have been written by a pirate of the Spanish main. As it was, I assumed the cryptograph to be English.

"You observe there are no divisions between the words. Had there been divisions the task would have been comparatively easy. In such case I should have commenced with a collation and analysis of the shorter words, and, had a word of a single letter occurred, as is most likely, (*a* or *I*, for example,) I should have considered the solution as assured. But, there being no division, my first step was to ascertain the predominant letters, as well as the least frequent. Counting all, I constructed a table thus:

Of the character 8 there are 33.

;	"	26.
4	"	19.
†)	"	16.
*	"	13.
5	"	12.
6	"	11.
("	10.
† 1	"	8.
o	"	6.
9 2	"	5.
: 3	"	4.
?	"	3.
¶	"	2.
]—.	"	1.

"Now, in English, the letter which most frequently occurs is *e*. Afterwards, the succession runs thus: *a o i d h n r s t u y c f g l m w b k p q x z*. *E* however predominates so remarkably, that an individual sentence of any length is rarely seen, in which it is not the prevailing character.

"Here, then, we have, in the very beginning, the groundwork for something more than a mere guess. The general use which may be made of the table is obvious—but, in this particular cipher, we shall only very partially require its aid. As our predominant character is 8, we will commence by assuming it as the *e* of the natural alphabet. To verify the supposition, let us observe if the 8 be seen often in couples—for *e* is doubled with great frequency in English—in such words, for example, as 'meet,' 'fleet,' 'speed,' 'seen,' 'been,' 'agree,' etc. In the present instance we see it doubled no less than five times, although the cryptograph is brief.

“Let us assume 8, then, as *e*. Now, of all *words* in the language, ‘the’ is most usual; let us see, therefore, whether there are not repetitions of any three characters, in the same order of collocation, the last of them being 8. If we discover repetitions of such letters, so arranged, they will most probably represent the word ‘the.’ On inspection, we find no less than seven such arrangements, the characters being ;48. We may, therefore, assume that the semicolon represents *t*, that 4 represents *h*, and that 8 represents *e*—the last being now well confirmed. Thus a great step has been taken.

“But, having established a single word, we are enabled to establish a vastly important point; that is to say, several commencements and terminations of other words. Let us refer, for example, to the last instance but one, in which the combination ;48 occurs—not far from the end of the cipher. We know that the semicolon immediately ensuing is the commencement of a word, and, of the six characters succeeding this ‘the,’ we are cognizant of no less than five. Let us set these characters down, thus, by the letters we know them to represent, leaving a space for the unknown—

t eeth.

“Here we are enabled, at once, to discard the ‘*th*,’ as forming no portion of the word commencing with the first *t*; since, by experiment of the entire alphabet for a letter adapted to the vacancy, we perceive that no word can be formed of which this *th* can be a part. We are thus narrowed into

t ee,

and, going through the alphabet, if necessary, as before, we arrive at the word ‘tree,’ as the sole possible reading. We thus gain another letter, *r*, represented by (, with the words ‘the tree’ in juxtaposition.

“Looking beyond these words, for a short distance, we again see the combination ;48, and employ it by way of *termination* to what immediately precedes. We have thus this arrangement:

the tree ;4(†?34 the,

or, substituting the natural letters, where known, it reads thus:

the tree thr†?3h the.

“Now, if, in place of the unknown characters, we leave blank spaces, or substitute dots, we read thus:

the tree thr...h the,

when the word '*through*' makes itself evident at once. But this discovery gives us three new letters, *o*, *u*, and *g*, represented by †, ‡, and 3.

"Looking now, narrowly, through the cipher for combinations of known characters, we find, not very far from the beginning, this arrangement,

83(88, or egree,

which, plainly, is the conclusion of the word 'degree,' and gives us another letter, *d*, represented by †.

"Four letters beyond the word 'degree,' we perceive the combination

;46(;88*.

"Translating the known characters, and representing the unknown by dots, as before, we read thus:

th.rtee.

an arrangement immediately suggestive of the word 'thirteen,' and again furnishing us with two new characters, *i* and *n* represented by 6 and *.

"Referring, now, to the beginning of the cryptograph, we find the combination,

53†††.

"Translating as before, we obtain

.good,

which assures us that the first letter is *A*, and that the first two words are 'A good.'

"To avoid confusion, it is now time that we arrange our key, as far as discovered, in a tabular form. It will stand thus:

5	represents a	
†	"	d
8	"	e
3	"	g
4	"	h
6	"	i
*	"	n
‡	"	o
("	r
;	"	t
?	"	u

"We have, therefore no less than eleven of the most important

letters represented, and it will be unnecessary to proceed with the details of the solution. I have said enough to convince you that ciphers of this nature are readily soluble, and to give you some insight into the *rationale* of their development. But be assured the specimen before us appertains to the very simplest species of cryptograph. It now only remains to give you the full translation of the characters upon the parchment, as unriddled. Here it is:

“A good glass in the bishop’s hostel in the devil’s seat twenty-one degrees and thirteen minutes northeast and by north main branch seventh limb east side shoot from the left eye of the death’s-head a bee-line from the tree through the shot fifty feet out.”

“But,” said I, “the enigma seems still in as bad a condition as ever. How is it possible to extort a meaning from all this jargon about ‘devil’s seats,’ ‘death’s-heads,’ and ‘bishops hotels’?”

“I confess,” replied Legrand, “that the matter still wears a serious aspect, when regarded with a casual glance. My first endeavour was to divide the sentence into the natural division intended by the cryptographist.”

“You mean, to punctuate it?”

“Something of that kind.”

“But how was it possible to effect this?”

“I reflected that it had been a *point* with the writer to run his words together without division, so as to increase the difficulty of solution. Now, a not over-acute man, in pursuing such an object, would be nearly certain to overdo the matter. When, in the course of his composition, he arrived at a break in his subject which would naturally require a pause, or a point, he would be exceedingly apt to run his characters, at this place, more than usually close together. If you will observe the MS., in the present instance, you will easily detect five such cases of unusual crowding. Acting upon this hint, I made the division thus:

“A good glass in the bishop’s hostel in the devil’s seat—twenty-one degrees and thirteen minutes—northeast and by north—main branch seventh limb east side—shoot from the left eye of the death’s-head—a bee-line from the tree through the shot fifty feet out.”

“Even this division,” said I, “leaves me still in the dark.”

“It left me also in the dark,” replied Legrand, “for a few days; during which I made diligent inquiry, in the neighbourhood of

Sullivan's Island, for any building which went by the name of the 'Bishop's Hotel'; for, of course, I dropped the obsolete word 'hostel.' Gaining no information on the subject, I was on the point of extending my sphere of search, and proceeding in a more systematic manner, when, one morning, it entered into my head, quite suddenly, that this 'Bishop's Hostel' might have some reference to an old family, of the name of Bessop, which, time out of mind, had held possession of an ancient manor-house, about four miles to the northward of the island. I accordingly went over to the plantation, and re-instituted my inquiries among the older negroes of the place. At length, one of the most aged of the women said that she had heard of such a place as *Bessop's Castle*, and thought that she could guide me to it, but that it was not a castle, nor a tavern, but a high rock.

"I offered to pay her well for her trouble, and, after some demur, she consented to accompany me to the spot. We found it without much difficulty, when, dismissing her, I proceeded to examine the place. The 'castle' consisted of an irregular assemblage of cliffs and rocks—one of the latter being quite remarkable for its height as well as for its insulated and artificial appearance. I clambered to its apex, and then felt much at a loss as to what should be next done.

"While I was busied in reflection, my eyes fell upon a narrow ledge in the eastern face of the rock, perhaps a yard below the summit upon which I stood. This ledge projected about eighteen inches, and was not more than a foot wide, while a niche in the cliff just above it, gave it a rude resemblance to one of the hollow-backed chairs used by our ancestors. I made no doubt that here was the 'devil's-seat' alluded to in the MS., and now I seemed to grasp the full secret of the riddle.

"The 'good glass,' I knew, could have reference to nothing but a telescope; for the word 'glass' is rarely employed in any other sense by seamen. Now here, I at once saw, was a telescope to be used, and a definite point of view, *admitting no variation*, from which to use it. Nor did I hesitate to believe that the phrases, 'twenty-one degrees and thirteen minutes,' and, 'northeast and by north,' were intended as directions for the levelling of the glass. Greatly excited by these discoveries, I hurried home, procured a telescope, and returned to the rock.

"I let myself down to the ledge, and found that it was impossible to retain a seat on it unless in one particular position. This fact confirmed my preconceived idea. I proceeded to use the glass. Of course, the 'twenty-one degrees and thirteen minutes' could allude to nothing but elevation above the visible horizon, since the horizontal direction was clearly indicated by the words, 'northeast and by north.' This latter direction I at once established by means of a pocket-compass; then, pointing the glass as nearly at an angle of twenty-one degrees of elevation as I could do it by guess, I moved it cautiously up or down, until my attention was arrested by a circular rift or opening in the foliage of a large tree that overtopped its fellows in the distance. In the centre of this rift I perceived a white spot, but could not, at first, distinguish what it was. Adjusting the focus of the telescope, I again looked, and now made it out to be a human skull.

"On this discovery I was so sanguine as to consider the enigma solved; for the phrase 'main branch, seventh limb, east side,' could refer only to the position of the skull on the tree, while 'shoot from the left eye of the death's-head' admitted, also, of but one interpretation, in regard to a search for buried treasure. I perceived that the design was to drop a bullet from the left eye of the skull, and that a bee-line, or, in other words, a straight line, drawn from the nearest point of the trunk through 'the shot,' (or the spot where the bullet fell), and thence extended to a distance of fifty feet, would indicate a definite point—and beneath this point I thought it at least *possible* that a deposit of value lay concealed."

"All this," I said, "is exceedingly clear, and, although ingenious, still simple and explicit. When you left the Bishop's Hotel, what then?"

"Why, having carefully taken the bearings of the tree, I turned homeward. The instant that I left 'the devil's seat,' however, the circular rift vanished; nor could I get a glimpse of it afterward, turn as I would. What seems to me the chief ingenuity in this whole business, is the fact, (for repeated experiment has convinced me it *is* a fact) that the circular opening in question is visible from no other attainable point of view than that afforded by the narrow ledge on the face of the rock.

"In this expedition to the 'Bishop's Hotel' I had been attended

by Jupiter, who had, no doubt, observed, for some weeks past, the abstraction of my demeanour, and took especial care not to leave me alone. But, on the next day, getting up very early, I contrived to give him the slip, and went into the hills in search of the tree. After much toil I found it. When I came home at night my valet proposed to give me a flogging. With the rest of the adventure I believe you are as well acquainted as myself."

"I suppose," said I, "you missed the spot, in the first attempt at digging, through Jupiter's stupidity in letting the bug fall through the right instead of through the left eye of the skull."

"Precisely. This mistake made a difference of about two inches and a half in the 'shot'—that is to say, in the position of the peg nearest the tree; and had the treasure been *beneath* the 'shot,' the error would have been of little moment; but the 'shot,' together with the nearest point of the tree, were merely two points for the establishment of a line of direction; of course the error, however trivial in the beginning, increased as we proceeded with the line, and by the time we had gone fifty feet, threw us quite off the scent. But for my deep-seated convictions that treasure was here somewhere actually buried, we might have had all our labour in vain."

"I presume the fancy of *the skull*, of letting fall a bullet through the skull's eye—was suggested to Kidd by the piratical flag. No doubt he felt a kind of poetical consistency in recovering his money through this ominous insignum."

"Perhaps so; still I cannot help thinking that common-sense had quite as much to do with the matter as poetical consistency. To be visible from the devil's seat, it was necessary that the object, if small, should be white; and there is nothing like your human skull for retaining and even increasing its whiteness under exposure to all vicissitudes of weather."

"But your grandiloquence, and your conduct in swinging the beetle—how excessively odd! I was sure you were mad. And why did you insist on letting fall the bug, instead of a bullet, from the skull?"

"Why, to be frank, I felt somewhat annoyed by your evident suspicions touching my sanity, and so resolved to punish you quietly, in my own way, by a little bit of sober mystification. For this reason I swung the beetle, and for this reason I let it fall

from the tree. An observation of yours about its great weight suggested the latter idea."

"Yes, I perceive; and now there is only one point which puzzles me. What are we to make of the skeletons found in the hole?"

"That is a question I am no more able to answer than yourself. There seems, however, only one plausible way of accounting for them—and yet it is dreadful to believe in such atrocity as my suggestion would imply. It is clear that Kidd—if Kidd indeed secreted this treasure, which I doubt not—it is clear that he must have had assistance in the labour. But the worst of this labour concluded, he may have thought it expedient to remove all participants in his secret. Perhaps a couple of blows with a mattock were sufficient, while his coadjutors were busy in the pit; perhaps it required a dozen—who shall tell?"

EMERSON

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803-82), a great American writer, was born at Boston and educated at Harvard University. His chief works are *Essays*, *English Traits* and *Representative Men*. Emerson was much interested in the Hindu sacred writings, and gave the following poem the name of the chief Hindu deity. He himself relates that the children in a certain school were all asked to learn a poem, and one little girl chose *Brahma*. When the teacher asked why she had chosen such a piece, she replied, "I chose this because it was so easy: it just means that God is everything and everywhere."

BRAHMA

If the red slayer think he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near;
Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear;
And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out;
When me they fly, I am the wings;
I am the doubter and the doubt,
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,
And pine in vain the sacred Seven;
But thou, meek lover of the good!
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.

EMILY BRONTË

EMILY BRONTË (1818-48), one of three remarkable sisters, was born in Yorkshire. Charlotte wrote *Jane Eyre*, *Shirley* and *Villette*, all great novels, and Emily the story called *Wuthering Heights*, together with some poems.

LAST LINES

No coward soul is mine,
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere:
I see Heaven's glories shine,
And faith shines equal, arming me from fear.

O God within my breast,
Almighty, every-present Deity!
Life—that in me has rest,
As I—undying Life—have power in thee!

Vain are the thousand creeds
That move men's hearts: unutterably vain;
Worthless as withered weeds,
Or idlest froth amid the boundless main,

To waken doubt in one
Holding so fast by thine infinity;
So surely anchored on
The steadfast rock of immortality.

With wide-embracing love
Thy spirit animates eternal years,
Pervades and broods above,
Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates, and rears.

Though earth and man were gone,
 And suns and universes ceased to be,
 And Thou were left alone,
 Every existence would exist in Thee.

There is no room for Death,
 Nor atom that his might could render void:
 Thou—THOU art Being and Breath,
 And what THOU art may never be destroyed.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI (1830-94), the sister of the famous poet and painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti, wrote many poems religious in tone.

UPHILL

Does the road wind uphill all the way?
 Yes, to the very end.
 Will the day's journey take the whole long day?
 From morn to night, my friend.

But is there for the night a resting place?
 A roof for when the slow, dark hours begin.
 May not the darkness hide it from my face?
 You cannot miss that inn.

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?
 Those who have gone before.
 'Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?
 They will not keep you waiting at that door.

Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?
 Of labour you shall find the sum.
 Will there be beds for me and all who seek?
 Yea, beds for all who come.

DANIEL DEFOE

DANIEL DEFOE (1659-1731) was born in London and became a man of business; but he soon began to write, mostly on the political disputes of his day, and developed into one of the most fertile of all authors, pouring out essays, pamphlets, novels and newspaper work in huge quantities. He was sent to Newgate for attacking the government, so his description of the prison is written from personal knowledge. Much that he wrote is not now important; but his rough, satirical poem *The Trueborn Englishman* is very good and some of his pamphlets are still readable. He is remembered, however, first and most of all, for *Robinson Crusoe*, and afterwards for several other novels and inventions, the chief of which are *Memoirs of a Cavalier*, *Captain Singleton*, *Colonel Jack*, *Moll Flanders* and *A Journal of the Plague Year*. The passage that follows is taken from *Moll Flanders* and gives a vivid picture of Newgate prison two hundred years ago. She who tells the story is a companion of thieves, and has now herself been arrested for theft, a crime then punished by death.

A PRISON SKETCH

Eighteenth Century

The sight of the constable indeed struck me, and I thought I should have sunk into the ground; I fell into faintings, and indeed the people themselves thought I would have died, when the woman argued again for me, and entreated her husband, seeing they had lost nothing, to let me go. I offered him to pay for the two pieces, whatever the value was, though I had not got them, and argued that as he had his goods, and had really lost nothing, it would be cruel to pursue me to death, and have my blood for the bare attempt of taking them. I put the constable in mind too that I had broke no doors, nor carried anything away; and when I came to the justice, and pleaded there that I had neither broken anything to get in, nor carried anything out, the justice was inclined to have released me; but the first saucy jade that stopped me, affirming that I was going out with the goods, but that she stopped me and pulled me back, the justice upon that point committed me, and I was carried to Newgate, that horrid place! My very blood chills at the mention of its name; the place where so many of my comrades had been locked up, and from whence they went to the fatal tree; the place where my mother suffered so deeply, where I was brought into the world, and from whence

I expected no redemption, but by an infamous death: to conclude, the place that had so long expected me, and which with so much art and success I had so long avoided.

I was now fixed indeed; 'tis impossible to describe the terror of my mind, when I was first brought in, and when I looked round upon all the horrors of that dismal place: I looked on myself as lost, and that I had nothing to think of but of going out of the world, and that with the utmost infamy; the hellish noise, the roaring, swearing and clamour, the stench and nastiness, and all the dreadful afflicting things that I saw there, joined to make the place seem an emblem of hell itself, and a kind of an entrance into it.

Now I reproached myself with the many hints I had had, as I have mentioned above, from my own reason, from the sense of my good circumstances, and of the many dangers I had escaped, to leave off while I was well, and how I had withstood them all, and hardened my thoughts against all fear; it seemed to me that I was hurried on by an inevitable fate to this day of misery, and that now I was to expiate all my offences at the gallows, that I was now to give satisfaction to justice with my blood, and that I was to come to the last hour of my life and of my wickedness together. These things poured themselves in upon my thoughts in a confused manner, and left me overwhelmed with melancholy and despair.

Then I repented heartily of all my life past, but that repentance yielded me no satisfaction, no peace, no, not in the least, because, as I said to myself, it was repenting after the power of farther sinning was taken away. I seemed not to mourn that I had committed such crimes, and for the fact, as it was an offence against God and my neighbours; but that I was to be punished for it; I was a penitent as I thought, not that I had sinned, but that I was to suffer, and this took away all the comfort of my repentance in my own thoughts.

I got no sleep for several nights or days after I came into that wretched place, and glad I would have been for some time to have died there, though I did not consider dying as it ought to be considered neither; indeed nothing could be filled with more horror to my imagination than the very place, nothing was more odious to me than the company that was there. O! if I had but been sent

to any place in the world, and not to Newgate, I should have thought myself happy. In the next place, how did the hardened wretches that were there before me triumph over me!... They flouted me with dejections, welcomed me to the place, wished me joy, bid me have a good heart, not be cast down, things might not be so bad as I feared, and the like; then called for brandy, and drank to me; but put it all up to my score, for they told me I was but just come to the college, as they called it, and sure I had money in my pocket, though they had none.

I asked one of this crew how long she had been there. She said four months. I asked her how the place looked to her when she first came into it? Just as it did now to me, says she, dreadful and frightful that she thought she was in hell and I believe so still, adds she, but it is natural to me now, I don't disturb myself about it. I suppose, says I, you are in no danger of what is to follow. Nay, says she, you are mistaken there I am sure, for I am under sentence... Well, says I, and are you thus easy? Ay, says she, I can't help myself, what signifies being sad? if I am hanged there's an end of me, and away she turned dancing, and sings as she goes, the following piece of Newgate wit:

If I swing by the string,
I shall hear the bell ring¹,
And then there's an end of poor Jenny.

I mention this, because it would be worth the observation of any prisoner, who shall hereafter fall into the same misfortune and come to that dreadful place of Newgate, how time, necessity, and conversing with the wretches that are there, familiarizes the place to them; how at last they become reconciled to that which at first was the greatest dread upon their spirits in the world, and are as impudently cheerful and merry in their misery, as they were when out of it.

I cannot say, as some do, this devil is not so black as he is painted; for indeed no colours can represent that place to the life; nor any soul conceive aright of it, but those who have been sufferers there. But how hell should become by degrees so natural, and not only tolerable, but even agreeable, is a thing unintelligible, but by those who have experienced it, as I have...

¹ The bell at St Sepulchre's, which tolls upon execution day.

I was as certain to be cast for my life as I was that I was alive, and I had nothing to do, but think of dying. I had but a sad foundation to build upon for that, as I said before, for all my repentance appeared to me to be only the effect of my fear of death, not a sincere regret for the wicked life that I had lived, and which had brought this misery upon me, or for the offending my Creator, who was now suddenly to be my judge.

I lived many days here under the utmost horror; I had death as it were in view, and thought of nothing night or day, but of gibbets and halters, evil spirits and devils; it is not to be expressed how I was harassed, between the dreadful apprehensions of death, and the terror of my conscience reproaching me with my past horrible life. . . .

I know not how it was, but by the indefatigable application of my diligent governess I had no bill preferred against me the first Session, I mean to the grand jury, at Guildhall; so I had another month or five weeks before me, and without doubt this ought to have been accepted by me as so much time given me for reflection upon what was past, and preparation for what was to come; I ought to have esteemed it as a space given me for repentance, and have employed it as such; but it was not in me. I was sorry, as before, for being in Newgate, but had few signs of repentance about me.

On the contrary, like the water in the hollows of mountains, which petrifies and turns into stone whatever it is suffered to drop upon; so the continual conversing with such a crew of hell-hounds had the same common operation upon me as upon other people; I degenerated into stone, I turned first stupid and senseless, and then brutish and thoughtless, and at last raving mad as any of them; in short, I became as naturally pleased and easy with the place, as if indeed I had been born there.

It is scarce possible to imagine that our natures should be capable of so much degeneracy, as to make that pleasant and agreeable, that in itself is the most complete misery. Here was a circumstance, that I think it is scarce possible to mention a worse: I was as exquisitely miserable, as it was possible for any one to be, that had life and health, and money to help them as I had.

I had a weight of guilt upon me, enough to sink any creature who had the least power of reflection left, and had any sense upon

them of the happiness of this life, or the misery of another; I had at first some remorse indeed, but no repentance; I had now neither remorse or repentance. I had a crime charged on me, the punishment of which was death; the proof so evident, that there was no room for me, so much as to plead not guilty; I had the name of an old offender, so that I had nothing to expect but death, neither had I myself any thoughts of escaping, and yet a certain strange lethargy of soul possessed me; I had no trouble, no apprehensions, no sorrow about me; the first surprise was gone; I was, I may well say, I know not how; my senses, my reason, nay, my conscience, were all asleep; my course of life for forty years had been a horrid complication of wickedness, everything but murder and treason had been my practice, from the age of eighteen, or thereabouts, to threescore; and now I was engulfed in the misery of punishment, and had an infamous death at the door, and yet I had no sense of my condition, no thought of heaven or hell, at least that went any farther than a bare flying touch, like the stitch or pain that gives a hint and goes off; I neither had a heart to ask God's mercy, or indeed to think of it. And in this I think I have given a brief description of the completest misery on earth.

All my terrifying thoughts were past, the horrors of the place were become familiar, and I felt no more uneasiness at the noise and clamours of the prison, than they did who made that noise; in a word, I was become a mere Newgate-bird, as wicked and as outrageous as any of them; nay, I scarce retained the habit and custom of good breeding and manners, which all along till now run through my conversation; so thorough a degeneracy had possessed me, that I was no more the same thing that I had been, than if I had never been otherwise than what I was now.

[One night three highwaymen are brought into the prison. She recognises one of them as her husband, and, on hearing that he is certain to be hanged, she is overcome with grief.]

While I was under these influences of sorrow for him, came notice to me that the next sessions there would be a bill preferred to the grand jury against me, and that I should be tried for my life. My temper was touched before, the wretched boldness of spirit which I had acquired, abated, and conscious guilt began to flow in my mind. In short, I began to think, and to think indeed

is one real advance from hell to heaven; all that hardened state and temper of soul, which I said so much of before, is but a deprivation of thought; he that is restored to his thinking, is restored to himself.

As soon as I began, I say, to think, the first thing that occurred to me broke out thus; Lord! what will become of me? I shall be cast, to be sure, and there is nothing beyond that, but death! I have no friends, what shall I do? I shall be certainly cast! Lord! have mercy upon me! what will become of me! This was a sad thought, you will say, to be the first, after so long time, that had started in my soul of that kind, and yet even this was nothing but fright at what was to come; there was not a word of sincere repentance in it all. However, I was dreadfully dejected, and disconsolate to the last degree; and as I had no friend to communicate my distressed thoughts to, it lay so heavy upon me, that it threw me into fits and swoonings several times a day. I sent for my old governess, and she, give her her due, acted the part of a true friend; she left no stone unturned to prevent the grand jury finding the bill; she went to several of the jury-men, talked with them, and endeavoured to possess them with favourable dispositions; but all would not do, and the jury found the bill for robbery and house-breaking, that is, for felony and burglary.

I sunk down when they brought the news of it, and after I came to myself I thought I should have died with the weight of it. My governess acted a true mother to me; she pitied me, she cried with me, and for me; but she could not help me; and to add to the terror of it, 'twas the discourse all over the house, that I should die for it; I could hear them talk it among themselves very often; and see them shake their heads, and say they were sorry for it, and the like, as is usual in the place; but still nobody came to tell me their thoughts, till at last one of the keepers came to me privately, and said with a sigh, Well, Mrs Flanders, you will be tried a Friday (this was but a Wednesday), what do you intend to do? I turned as white as a clout, and said, God knows what I shall do, for my part I know not what to do. Why, says he, I won't flatter you, I would have you prepare for death, for I doubt you will be cast, and as you are an old offender, I doubt you will find but little mercy. They say, added he, your case is

very plain, and that the witnesses swear so home against you, there will be no standing it.

This was a stab into the very vitals of one under such a burthen, and I could not speak a word, good or bad, for a great while; at last I burst out into tears, and said to him, O sir, what must I do? Do, says he, send for a minister, and talk with him? for indeed, Mrs Flanders, unless you have very good friends, you are no woman for this world.

This was plain dealing indeed, but it was very harsh to me, at least I thought it so. He left me in the greatest confusion imaginable, and all that night I lay awake; and now I began to say my prayers, which I had scarce done before since my last husband's death, or from a little while after; and truly I may well call it saying my prayers; for I was in such a confusion, and had such horror upon my mind, that though I cried, and repeated several times the ordinary expression of, Lord have mercy upon me! I never brought myself to any sense of being a miserable sinner, as indeed I was, and of confessing my sins to God, and begging pardon for the sake of Jesus Christ; I was overwhelmed with the sense of my condition, being tried for my life, and being sure to be executed, and on this account, I cried out all night, Lord! what will become of me? Lord! what shall I do? Lord have mercy upon me! and the like....

Well, there was no remedy, the prosecution went on, and on the Thursday I was carried down to the sessions-house, where I was arraigned, as they called it, and the next day I was appointed to be tried. At the arraignment I pleaded Not guilty, and well I might, for I was indicted for felony and burglary; that is, for feloniously stealing two pieces of brocaded silk, value £46, the goods of Anthony Johnson, and for breaking open the doors; whereas I knew very well they could not pretend I had broken up the doors, or so much as lifted up a latch.

On the Friday I was brought to my trial. I had exhausted my spirits with crying for two or three days before, that I slept better the Thursday night than I expected, and had more courage for my trial than I thought possible for me to have....

I pleaded that I had stole nothing, they had lost nothing, that the door was open, and I went in with design to buy: if, seeing nobody in the house, I had taken any of them up in my hand, it

could not be concluded that I intended to steal them, for that I never carried them farther than the door, to look on them with the better light.

The court would not allow that by any means, and made a kind of a jest of my intending to buy the goods, that being no shop for the selling of anything. . . . In short I was found guilty of felony, but acquitted of the burglary, which was but small comfort to me, the first bringing me to a sentence of death, and the last would have done no more. The next day I was carried down to receive the dreadful sentence, and when they came to ask me what I had to say why sentence should not pass, I stood mute awhile, but somebody prompted me aloud to speak to the judges, for that they could represent things favourably for me. This encouraged me, and I told them I had nothing to say to stop the sentence; but that I had much to say to bespeak the mercy of the court; that I hoped they would allow something in such a case, for the circumstances of it, that I had broken no doors, had carried nothing off, that nobody had lost anything; that the person whose goods they were, was pleased to say he desired mercy might be shown (which indeed he very honestly did), that at the worst it was the first offence and that I had never been before any court of justice before; and in a word, I spoke with more courage than I thought I could have done, and in such a moving tone, and though with tears, yet not so many tears as to obstruct my speech, that I could see it moved others to tears that heard me.

The judges sat grave and mute, gave me an easy hearing, and time to say all that I would, but saying neither yes or no to it, pronounced the sentence of death upon me; a sentence to me like death itself, which confounded me; I had no more spirit left in me; I had no tongue to speak, or eyes to look up either to God or man. . . .

It is rather to be thought of than expressed, what was now my condition; I had nothing before me but death; and as I had no friends to assist me, I expected nothing but to find my name in the dead warrant, which was to come for the execution, next Friday, of five more and myself.

In the mean time my poor distressed governess sent me a minister, who at her request came to visit me. He exhorted me seriously to repent of all my sins, and to dally no longer with my soul; not flattering myself with hopes of life, which he said, he



PRISON SCENE
A Rake's Progress
Hogarth



THE IDLE PRENTICE CARRIED TO TYBURN

Hogarth

was informed there was no room to expect, but unfeignedly to look up to God with my whole soul, and to cry for pardon in the name of Jesus Christ....

I am not able to repeat the excellent discourses of this extraordinary man; all that I am able to do, is to say, that he revived my heart, and brought me into such a condition, that I never knew anything of in my life before....

It was no less than twelve days after our receiving sentence, before any were ordered for execution, and then the dead warrant, as they call it, came down, and I found my name was among them. A terrible blow this was to my new resolutions; indeed my heart sunk within me, and I swooned away twice, one after another, but spoke not a word. The good minister was sorely afflicted for me, and did what he could to comfort me, with the same arguments, and the same moving eloquence that he did before....

I wondered much that I did not see him all the next day, it being but the day before the time appointed for execution;... I waited with great impatience, and under the greatest oppression of spirits imaginable till about four o'clock, when he came to my apartment; for I had obtained the favour, by the help of money, nothing being to be done in that place without it, not to be kept in the condemned hole, among the rest of the prisoners who were to die, but to have a little dirty chamber to myself.

My heart leaped within me for joy when I heard his voice at the door, even before I saw him; but let anyone judge what kind of emotion I found in my soul, when, after having made a short excuse for his not coming, he showed me that his time had been employed on my account, that he had obtained a favourable report from the recorder in my case, and in short that he had brought me a reprieve.

He used all the caution that he was able in letting me know what it would have been double cruelty to have concealed; for as grief had overset me before, so did joy overset me now, and I fell into a more dangerous swooning than at first, and it was not without difficulty that I was recovered at all....

The next morning there was a sad scene indeed in the prison; the first thing I was saluted with in the morning, was the tolling of the great bell at St Sepulchre's, which ushered in the day. As soon as it began to toll, a dismal groaning and crying was heard

from the condemned hole, where there lay six poor souls, who were to be executed that day, some for one crime, some for another, and two for murder.

This was followed by a confused clamour in the house, among the several prisoners, expressing their awkward sorrows for the poor creatures that were to die, but in a manner extremely differing one from another; some cried for them, some brutishly huzza'd, and wished them a good journey; some blamed and cursed those that had brought them to it, many pitying them, and some few, but very few, praying for them.

There was hardly room for so much composure of mind as was required for me to bless the merciful providence that had, as it were, snatched me out of the jaws of this destruction: I remained as it were, dumb and silent, overcome with the sense of it, and not able to express what I had in my heart; for the passions on such occasions as these, are certainly so agitated as not to be able presently to regulate their own motions.

All the while the poor condemned creatures were preparing for death, and the Ordinary, as they call him, was busy with them, disposing them to submit to their sentence: I say all this while I was seized with a fit of trembling, as much as I could have been, if I had been in the same condition as I was the day before; I was so violently agitated by this surprising fit, that I shook as if it had been in an ague; so that I could not speak or look, but like one distracted. As soon as they were all put into the carts and gone, which however I had not courage enough to see, I fell into a fit of crying involuntarily, as a mere distemper, and yet so violent, and it held me so long, that I knew not what course to take, nor could I stop, or put a check to it, no, not with all the strength and courage I had.

This fit of crying held me near two hours, and, as I believe, held me till they were all out of the world, and then a most humble penitent serious kind of joy succeeded; a real transport it was, or passion of thankfulness, and in this I continued most part of the day....

I lay in the prison near fifteen weeks after this; what the reason of it was, I know not, but at the end of this time I was put on board of a ship in the Thames, and with me a gang of thirteen as hardened vile creatures as ever Newgate produced in my time.

R. B. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM

ROBERT BONTINE CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM was born (1852) of a noble Scottish family. He was educated at Harrow, and travelled much. For taking part in an "unemployed" demonstration against the orders of the police, he was sent to prison, so the following sketch, from his volume *Success*, may be taken as a record of personal experience. He has written many brilliant sketches, several dealing with life in Spain and in South America.

SURSUM CORDA

There is a plethora of talk, which seems to stop all thought, and by its ceaseless noise drive those who wish to think back on themselves. All talk, and no one listens, still less answers, for all must swell the general output of the chatter of the world.... But be that as it may, let speech be only silver, silence gold, take but away our speech, chain us within the terror of ourselves by silence long enforced, and the most abject drivel of the sound business man, whose every thought is abject platitude, whose mind has never passed from the strict limits of his villa and his counting-house, becomes as sweet as music to our ears. Let those who doubt try for a month to keep strict silence, never to speak, to hear and never dare to answer, to enchain their thoughts, their wishes, their desires, passions, anxieties, affections, regrets, remorse, anger, hatreds, loves—in brief, to leave the gamut of that inner life which makes a man, with all the notes untouched....

Think on a silent world, a world in which men walked about in all respects equipped with every organ, every sense, but without speech. They might converse by signs as Indians do upon the trail, but I maintain no city of tremendous night could be more awful than the horror of a speechless world. Never to speak, only to find our tongues in agony of fear, as horses tied within a burning stable, dumb idiots in great peril of their lives, or, as the animal under curare, upon the vivisector's bench (calling to man who should be as his God), give out occasionally some horrid sound, and even then know it would be unheard.... Let speech be golden, silver, diffusive, tedious, flippant, deceptive, corrupting, somnolent, evasive, let it be what you will, it is the only medium by which we can assert that majesty which some folks tell us is inherent in mankind, but which the greater part of us (from democratic sentiment perchance) rarely allow to creep into the light of day; it is the only humanizing influence innate in men, and thus it

seems unwise to put restraint upon it, except in Parliament. Chained dogs, parrots in cages, squirrels within their stationary bicycles, gold fish in globes, wild animals behind their bars, monkeys tied to an organ dressed in their little red woollen gowns (the fashion never changes), bears fastened to a Savoyard, camels on which climb multitudinous bands of children, elephants accompanied by a miserable "native" tramping about with tons of tourists on their backs, move me to wrath, and set me thinking what is it they can have done in an anterior state to undergo such treatment, and whether they were men who must as beasts thus expiate their crimes of *lèse-majesté* against the animals. Yet they are not condemned to silence, and perchance may fabulate at night or when their keepers sleep, or lie drunk, and in their ratiocination exhale their cares.

No, silence is reserved for men who have offended against the hazy principles of right and wrong, or over-stepped that ever-shifting frontier line, never too well defined, and which advancing toleration—that toleration which shall some day lighten life—may soon obliterate, or, if not quite obliterate, yet render the return across the line more feasible than now. When one considers it, how crass it is to shut men up in vast hotels, withdrawing them from any possible influence which might ever change their lives, and to confine them in a white-washed cell, with windows of Dutch glass, gas, and a Bible, table, chair, little square salt-box, wooden spoon, tin pan, schedule of rules, hell in their hearts, a pound of oakum in their hands, condemned to silence and to count the days, pricking them off under the ventilator with a bent nail or pin!

Well was it said, the only humanizing influence in a prison comes from the prisoners. Let the officials do their duty as they think they should, the governor be humane, the doctor know a little of his work, the chaplain not too inept, still prisoners of whatever rank or class, imprisoned for whatever crime, offence, or misdemeanour, look on each other as old friends after a day or two within the prison walls. Day follows day with "skilly," exercise, with chapel, with dreary dullness, and with counting hours. Night follows night, and when the light goes out the tramping up and down the cells begins, the rappings, and the mysterious code by which the prisoners communicate, sound through the building like an imprisoned woodpecker tapping to

be free; tremendous nights of eight and forty hours, a twisting, turning, rising oft, and lying down to rise again, of watching, counting up to a million, walking about and touching every separate article; of thinking upon every base action of one's life, of breaking out a cursing like a drab; then falling to a fitful, unrefreshing sleep which seems to last but for a minute, and then the morning bell.

Happier by far the men who, in my youth in Spain, fished with a basket from the window for alms from passers by, smoked, drank, and played at cards, talked to their friends; whose wives and sisters brought them food in baskets, sat talking to them from outside, talked all day long, and passed the time of day with other citizens who walked the streets, read newspapers, and were known to other men as the "unhappy ones." A hell on earth you say, contaminating influences, murderers and petty thieves, with forgers, shop-lifters and debtors all together. At most a hell within a hell, and for the influence for good or ill, I take it that the communion of the sinners was at least as tolerable as we can hope to find (should we attain it) the communion of the saints....

A recent essayist fresh from his Malebolge has set forth all that men suffer shut within the silence of themselves, has written down the lessons that a man gains from the companionship of those who no doubt are in general not much more guilty than judges, gaolers, their chaplains, warders, or than ourselves who sit forgetting that our neglect entailed on them the lack of opportunity.

Well has he spoken of the humility of prisoners, their cheerfulness, compassion for one another, well described the circling miserable ring of lame folk, aged men, those on the sick list, and the rest, who in the prison yard revolve in a small circle round a post, too feeble to keep pace with the robuster rogues at exercise. I see them, too (can do so any time I close my eyes), in their long shoddy greatcoats, thin, pale, abject as dogs, purposeless, shiftless, self-abased, down-eyed, and shuffling in the prison shoes; expectorating, coughing, and a jest to those who trot around the ring stamping and cursing underneath their breath, what time the warders stand blowing their fingers, side arms belted on, stiff and immovable, and on the watch to pounce upon a contravention of the rules. But whilst the essayist has left his faithful picture of the misery of those he lived amongst for two long years, he has

omitted to set down the one event of prison life which breaks the dull monotony of weeks and days, and lets men feel for a brief space that they are men once more.

The dull week over, oakum all duly picked, cells well swept out, the skilly and brown bread discussed, beds all rolled up, the inspection over, faces all washed, with clean checked handkerchiefs (coarse as the topsail of a sugar droger) duly served out to last the week, the terrors of the bath encountered, the creepy silence of the vast unmurmuring hive is broken by the Sabbath bell. Then cells give up their dead, and corridors are full of the pale skilly-fed shuffling crowd, each headed by its warder, and every man with something of anticipation in his eye, ready to march to church. To the vast chapel streams the voiceless crowd, and soon each seat is filled, a warder duly placed at each bench end to see the worshippers do not engage in speculations as to the nature of the Trinity, but stand and kneel and sit, do everything in fact that other congregations do, omitting only the due dumping of the threepenny bit into the plate, and not forgetting that when two or three are gathered thus to pray, their Creator stands amongst them, although they all are thieves. And thus assembled in their hundreds, to make their prayer before the God of Prisons, the congregation sits—prisoners and captives, shut within themselves, and each man tortured by the thought that those outside have lost him from their minds. The chapel built in a semicircle, with the back seats gradually rising, so that all may be in view, the pulpit made of deal and varnished brown, the organ cased in deal, and for all ornament, over the altar the Creed, Lord's Prayer, and Ten Commandments, and those last look at the congregation as if ironically, and seem designed to fill the place of prison rules for all mankind. Furtively Bill greets Jack, and 'Enery, George: "'Ow are yer blokes? Another bloomin' week gone past." "I ain't a-talkin', Sir, 'twas t'other bloke," and a mysterious twitch makes itself felt from bench to bench till the whole chapel thus has said good-day. Loud peals the voluntary, the convicted organist—some thievish schoolmaster or poor bank clerk having made (according to himself) a slight mistake in counting out some notes—attacks an organ fugue, making wrong notes, drawing out all the stops alternately, keeping the vox humana permanently on, and plays and plays till a grim warder

stalks across the floor and bids him cease. "Dearly Beloved" seemed a little forced, our daily skilly scarce a matter worth much thanks, the trespasses of others we forgave thinking our own were all wiped out by our mere presence in the place, the Creed we treated as a subject well thrashed out, "Prisoners and Captives" made us all feel bad, the litany we roared out like a chant, calling upon the Lord to hear us in such voices that I feel He must have heard; epistle, gospel, collects we endured, sitting as patiently as toads in mud, all waiting for the hymn. The chaplain names it, and the organ roars, the organist rocks in his chair, on every brow the perspiration starts, all hands are clenched, and no one dares to look his neighbour in the eyes; then like an earthquake the pent-up sound breaks forth, the chapel quivers like a ship from stem to stern, dust flies, and loud from every throat the pious 'doggerel peals. And in the sounds the prison melts away, the doors are opened, and each man sits in his home surrounded by his friends, his Sunday dinner smokes, his children all clean washed are by his side, and so we sing, lift up our hearts and roar vociferously (praising some kind of God), shaken inside and out, yelling, perspiring, shouting each other down. Old lags and forgers, area sneaks, burglars, cheats, swindlers, confidence trick men, horse thieves, and dog stealers, men in for crimes of violence, assault and battery, with "smashers," swell mobsmen, blackmailers, all the vilest of the vile, no worse perhaps if all were known than are the most immaculate of all the good, made human once again during the sixteen verses of the hymn, and all the miseries of the past week wiped out in the brief exercise of unusual speech. The sixteen verses over, we sit down, and for a moment look at one another just in the same way as the worshippers are wont to do in St Paul's, Knightsbridge, or St Peter's, Eaton Square.

"Does you good, No. 8, the bloomin' 'ymn," an old lag says, but for the moment dazed by the ceasing of the noise, as Bernal Diaz says he was when the long tumult ended and Mexico was won, I do not answer, but at length deal him a friendly kick and think the sixteen verses of the hymn were all too short.

So in a side street when the frequent loafer sidles up, and says mysteriously "Gawd bless yer, chuck us arf a pint; I was in with you in that crooil plaice," I do so, not that I think he speaks the truth nor yet imagine that the prison, large though it was,

contained two million prisoners, but to relieve his thirst and for the sake of those condemned to silence, there "inside," and for the recollection of the "bloomin' 'ymn."

DANTE

DANTE ALIGHIERI (1265-1321), the greatest of Italian poets, was born at Florence in very troubled times of strife between Italian states and sundry European powers. Dante held high office in his native city, but, during his absence on an embassy, his enemies triumphed, and he was first banished and then sentenced to death. Henceforth, he lived for many years the life of a wanderer. His native city he never saw again, and he died in exile at Ravenna. Dante's high nobility of character is well shown in his striking features. His writings form the basis of Italian literature and had great influence on the literature of the rest of Europe. Of his works, two only need be named, *Vita Nuova* or *The New Life* (beautifully translated into English by Rossetti), telling the story of his love for the lady Beatrice, and *Divina Commedia* or *The Divine Comedy*, a vision of Hell, Purgatory and Paradise, as they were understood in the Middle Ages. This has been frequently translated into English. The passages that follow are given in the version of H. F. Cary (1772-1844).

HELL

From CANTO I

In the midway of this our mortal life,
I found me in a gloomy wood, astray
Gone from the path direct: and e'en to tell,
It were no easy task, how savage wild
That forest, how robust and rough its growth,
Which to remember only, my dismay
Renews, in bitterness not far from death.
Yet to discourse of what there good befel,
All else will I relate discover'd there.

How first I enter'd it I scarce can say,
Such sleepy dulness in that instant weigh'd
My senses down, when the true path I left;
But when a mountain's foot I reached, where clos'd
The valley, that had pierc'd my heart with dread,
I look'd aloft, and saw his shoulders broad
Already vested with that planet's beam,
Who leads all wanderers safe through every way.



DANTE

Giotto

Then was a little respite to the fear,
That in my heart's recesses deep had lain,
All of that night, so pitifully pass'd:
And as a man, with difficult short breath,
Forespent with toiling, 'scap'd from sea to shore,
Turns to the perilous wide waste, and stands
At gaze: e'en so my spirit, that yet fail'd,
Struggling with terror, turn'd to view the straits
That none hath pass'd and liv'd. My weary frame
After short pause recomforted, again
I journey'd on over that lonely steep,
The hinder foot still firmer. Scarce the ascent
Began, when, lo! a panther, nimble, light,
And cover'd with a speckled skin, appear'd.
Nor, when it saw me, vanish'd, rather strove
To check my onward going; that oft-times,
With purpose to retrace my steps I turn'd.

The hour was morning's prime, and on his way
Aloft the sun ascended with those stars,
That with him rose, when Love divine first mov'd
Those its fair works: so that with joyous hope
All things conspir'd to fill me, the gay skin
Of that swift animal, the matin dawn
And the sweet season. Soon that joy was chas'd,
And by new dread succeeded, when in view
A lion came, 'gainst me as it appear'd,
With his head held aloft and hunger-mad,
That e'en the air was fear-struck. A she-wolf
Was at his heels, who in her leanness seem'd
Full of all wants, and many a land hath made
Disconsolate ere now. She with such fear
O'erwhelm'd me, at the sight of her appall'd,
That of the height all hope I lost. As one,
Who with his gain elated, sees the time
When all unwares is gone, he inwardly
Mourns with heart-gripping anguish; such was I,
Haunted by that fell beast, never at peace,
Who coming o'er against me, by degrees
Impell'd me where the sun in silence rests.

While to the lower space with backward step
 I fell, my ken discern'd the form of one,
 Whose voice seem'd faint through long disuse of speech.
 When him in that great desert I espied,
 "Have mercy on me!" cried out I aloud,
 "Spirit! or living man! whate'er thou be!"

[The figure thus encountered is the great Roman poet Virgil, who has been sent to guide Dante through the first part of his mystic pilgrimage. It is Virgil who speaks the lines that follow.]

"I, for thy profit pond'ring, now devise,
 That thou mayst follow me; and I, thy guide,
 Will lead thee hence through an eternal space,
 Where thou shalt hear despairing shrieks, and see
 Spirits of old tormented, who invoke
 A second death; and those next view, who dwell
 Content in fire, for that they hope to come,
 Whene'er the time may be, among the blest,
 Into whose regions if thou then desire
 T'ascend, a spirit worthier than I
 Must lead thee, in whose charge, when I depart,
 Thou shalt be left: for that Almighty King,
 Who reigns above, a rebel to his law
 Adjudges me, and therefore hath decreed,
 That, to his city, none through me should come.
 He in all parts hath sway; there rules, there holds
 His citadel and throne. O happy those,
 Whom there he chooses!" I to him in few:
 "Bard! by that God, whom thou didst not adore,
 I do beseech thee (that this ill and worse
 I may escape) to lead me, where thou saidst,
 That I Saint Peter's gate may view, and those
 Who, as thou tell'st, are in such dismal plight."

Onward he mov'd, I close his steps pursu'd.

[On the way, Virgil tells Dante how the blessed lady Beatrice had come from heaven to send him on his mission of help. As they converse they plunge deeper and deeper into this sinister forest.]

From CANTO III

*"Through me you pass into the city' of woe:
 Through me you pass into eternal pain:
 Through me among the people lost for aye.
 Justice the founder of my fabric mov'd:
 To rear me was the task of power divine,
 Supremest wisdom, and primeval love.
 Before me things create were none, save things
 Eternal, and eternal I endure.
 All hope abandon, ye who enter here."*

Such characters, in colour dim, I mark'd
 Over a portal's lofty arch inscrib'd:
 Whereat I thus: "Master, these words import
 Hard meaning." He as one prepar'd replied:
 "Here thou must all distrust behind thee leave;
 Here be vile fear extinguish'd. We are come
 Where I have told thee we shall see the souls
 To misery doom'd, who intellectual good
 Have lost." And when his hand he had stretch'd forth
 To mine, with pleasant looks, whence I was cheer'd,
 Into that secret place he led me on.

Here sighs, with lamentations and loud moans,
 Resounded through the air pierc'd by no star,
 That e'en I wept at entering. Various tongues,
 Horrible languages, outcries of woe,
 Accents of anger, voices deep and hoarse,
 With hands together smote that swell'd the sounds,
 Made up a tumult, that for ever whirls
 Round through that air with solid darkness stain'd,
 Like to the sand that in the whirlwind flies.

I then, with error yet encompass'd, cried:
 "O master! what is this I hear? what race
 Are these, who seem so overcome with woe?"

He thus to me: "This miserable fate
 Suffer the wretched souls of those, who liv'd
 Without or praise or blame, with that ill band
 Of angels mix'd, who nor rebellious prov'd
 Nor yet were true to God, but for themselves

Were only. From his bounds Heaven drove them forth,
Not to impair his lustre; nor the depth
Of Hell receives them, lest th'accursed tribe
Should glory thence with exultation vain."

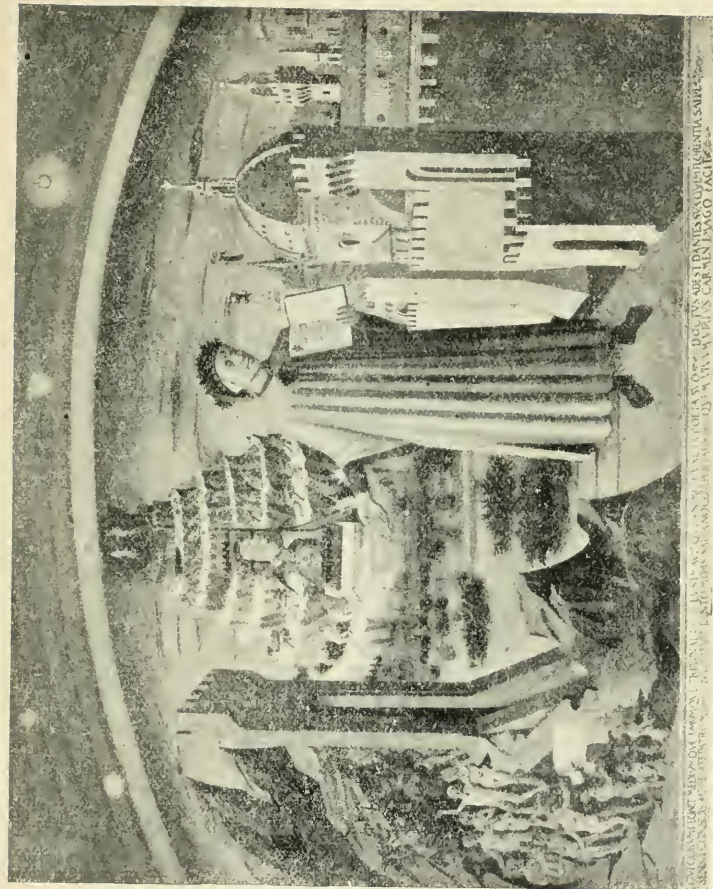
I then: "Master! what doth aggrieve them thus,
That they lament so loud?" He straight replied:—
"That will I tell thee briefly. These of death
No hope may entertain: and their blind life
So meanly passes, that all other lots
They envy. Fame of them the world hath none,
Nor suffers; mercy and justice scorn them both.
Speak not of them, but look, and pass them by."

And I, who straightway look'd, beheld a flag,
Which whirling ran around so rapidly,
That it no pause obtain'd: and following came
Such a long train of spirits, I should ne'er
Have thought that death so many had despoil'd.

When some of these I recognis'd, I saw
And knew the shade of him, who to base fear
Yielding, abjur'd his high estate. Forthwith
I understood for certain this the tribe
Of those ill spirits both to God displeasing
And to his foes. These wretches, who ne'er lived,
Went on in nakedness, and sorely stung
By wasps and hornets, which bedew'd their cheeks
With blood, that, mix'd with tears, dropp'd to their feet,
And by disgustful worms was gather'd there.

Then looking farther onwards I beheld
A throng upon the shore of a great stream:
Whereat I thus: "Sir! grant me now to know
Whom here we view, and whence impell'd they seem
So eager to pass o'er, as I discern
Through the blear light?" He thus to me in few:
"This shalt thou know, soon as our steps arrive
Beside the woeful tide of Acheron."

Then with eyes downward cast, and fill'd with shame,
Fearing my words offensive to his ear,
Till we had reach'd the river, I from speech
Abstain'd. And lo! toward us in a bark



DANTE AND HIS BOOK

Domenico di Michelino



THE GLOOMY WOOD

Botticelli

Comes an old man, hoary white with eld,
Crying, "Woe to you wicked spirits! hope not
Ever to see the sky again. I come
To take you to the other shore across,
Into eternal darkness, there to dwell
In fierce heat, and in ice. And thou, who there
Standest, live spirit! get thee hence, and leave
These who are dead." But soon as he beheld
I left them not, "By other way," said he,
"By other haven shalt thou come to shore,
Not by this passage; thee a nimbler boat
Must carry." Then to him thus spake my guide:
"Charon! thyself torment not: so't is will'd,
Where will and power are one: ask thou no more."

Straightway in silence fell the shaggy cheeks
Of him, the boatman o'er the livid lake,
Around whose eyes glar'd wheeling flames. Meanwhile
Those spirits, faint and naked, colour chang'd,
And gnash'd their teeth, soon as the cruel words
They heard. God and their parents they blasphem'd,
The human kind, the place, the time, and seed
That did engender them and give them birth.

Then altogether sorely wailing drew
To the curs'd strand, that every man must pass
Who fears not God. Charon, demoniac form,
With eyes of burning coal, collects them all,
Beck'ning, and each, that lingers, with his oar
Strikes. As fall off the light autumnal leaves,
One still another following, till the bough
Strews all its honours on the earth beneath;
E'en in like manner Adam's evil brood
Cast themselves one by one down from the shore,
Each at a beck, as falcon at his call.

Thus go they over through the umber'd wave,
And ever they on the opposing bank
Be landed, on this side another throng
Still gathers. "Son," thus spake the courteous guide,
"Those, who die subject to the wrath of God,
All here together come from every clime,

And to o'erpass the river are not loth:
 For so heaven's justice goads them on, that fear
 Is turn'd into desire. Hence ne'er hath pass'd
 Good spirit. If of thee Charon complain,
 Now mayst thou know the import of his words."

This said, the gloomy region trembling shook
 So terribly, that yet with clammy dew
 Fear chills my brow. The sad earth gave a blast,
 That, lightening, shot forth a vermilion flame,
 Which all my senses conquer'd quite, and I
 Down dropp'd, as one with sudden slumber seiz'd.

[Dante is led by Virgil through all the regions of Hell, and sees the punishments that torment notorious traitors, tyrants and evil-livers of all ages. The journey through Hell is told in thirty-four Cantos of the poem, the concluding lines of the last relating the return.]

By that hidden way
 My guide and I did enter, to return
 To the fair world: and heedless of repose
 We climb'd, he first, I following his steps,
 Till on our view the beautiful lights of heav'n
 Dawn'd through a circular opening in the cave:
 Thence issuing we again beheld the stars.

PURGATORY

[Dante having left the confines of Hell begins his journey through Purgatory—

that second region...
 In which the human spirit from sinful blot
 Is purged, and for ascent to Heaven prepares.

On his way to the gate of Purgatory he sees his friend Casella, famous for his musical gifts, and entreats him to sing—a meeting to which reference is made in Milton's sonnet to the composer Henry Lawes:

Dante shall give Fame leave to set thee higher
 Than his Casella whom he moved to sing,
 Met in the milder shades of Purgatory.]

From CANTO II

Meanwhile we linger'd by the water's brink,
 Like men, who, musing on their road, in thought
 Journey, while motionless the body rests.
 When lo! as near upon the hour of dawn,

Through the thick vapours Mars with fiery beam
 Glares down in west, over the ocean floor;
 So seem'd, what once again I hope to view,
 A light, so swiftly coming through the sea,
 No winged course might equal its career.
 From which when for a space I had withdrawn
 Mine eyes, to make inquiry of my guide,
 Again I look'd and saw it grown in size
 And brightness: then on either side appear'd
 Something, but what I knew not, of bright hue,
 And by degrees from underneath it came
 Another. My preceptor silent yet
 Stood, while the brightness, that we first discern'd,
 Open'd the form of wings: then when he knew
 The pilot, cried aloud, "Down, down; bend low
 Thy knees; behold God's angel: fold thy hands:
 Now shalt thou see true Ministers indeed.
 Lo! how all human means he sets at nought;
 So that nor oar he needs, nor other sail
 Except his wings, between such distant shores.
 Lo! how straight up to heav'n he holds them rear'd,
 Winnowing the air with those eternal plumes,
 That not like mortal hairs fall off or change."

As more and more toward us came, more bright
 Appear'd the bird of God, nor could the eye
 Endure his splendour near: I mine bent down.
 He drove ashore in a small bark so swift
 And light, that in its course no wave it drank.
 The heav'nly steersman at the prow was seen,
 Visibly written Blessed in his looks.
 Within, a hundred spirits and more there sat.
 "In Exitu Israel de Ægypto,"
 All with one voice together sang, with what
 In the remainder of that hymn is writ.
 Then soon as with the sign of holy cross
 He bless'd them, they at once leap'd out on land,
 He, swiftly as he came, return'd. The crew,
 There left, appear'd astounded with the place,
 Gazing around, as one who sees new sights.

From every side the sun darted his beams,
And with his arrowy radiance from mid heav'n
Had chas'd the Capricorn, when that strange tribe
Lifting their eyes towards us; "If ye know,
Declare what path will lead us to the mount."

Them Virgil answer'd. "Ye suppose, perchance,
Us well acquainted with this place: but here,
We, as yourselves, are strangers. Not long erst
We came, before you but a little space,
By other road so rough and hard, that now
Th' ascent will seem to us as play." The spirits,
Who from my breathing had perceiv'd I liv'd,
Grew pale with wonder. As the multitude
Flock round a herald, sent with olive branch,
To hear what news he brings, and in their haste
Tread one another down, e'en so at sight
Of me those happy spirits were fix'd, each one
Forgetful of its errand, to depart
Where, cleans'd from sin, it might be made all fair.

Then one I saw darting before the rest
With such fond ardour to embrace me, I
To do the like was mov'd. O shadows vain!
Except in outward semblance: thrice my hands
I clasp'd behind it, they as oft return'd
Empty into my breast again. Surprise
I need must think was painted in my looks,
For that the shadow smil'd and backward drew.
To follow it I hasten'd, but with voice
Of sweetness it enjoin'd me to desist.
Then who it was I knew, and pray'd of it,
To talk with me it would a little pause.
It answer'd: "Thee as in my mortal frame
I lov'd, so loos'd from it I love thee still,
And therefore pause; but why walkest thou here?"

"Not without purpose once more to return,
Thou find'st me, my Casella, where I am
Journeying this way;" I said, "but how of thee
Hath so much time been lost?" He answer'd straight:
"No outrage hath been done to me, if he

Who when and whom he chooses takes, hath oft
 Denied me passage here; since of just will
 His will he makes. These three months past indeed,
 He, whoso chose to enter, with free leave
 Hath taken...."

Then I: "If new law taketh not from thee
 Memory or custom of love-tuned song,
 That whilom all my cares had pow'r to 'swage;
 Please thee with it a little to console
 My spirit, that incumber'd with its frame,
 Travelling so far, of pain is overcome."

"Love that discourses in my thoughts," he then
 Began in such soft accents, that within
 The sweetness thrills me yet. My gentle guide
 And all who came with him, so well were pleas'd,
 That seem'd nought else might in their thoughts have room.

Fast fix'd in mute attention to his notes
 We stood, when lo! that old man venerable
 Exclaiming, "How is this, ye tardy spirits?
 What negligence detains you loit'ring here?
 Run to the mountain to cast off those scales,
 That from your eyes the sight of God conceal."

As a wild flock of pigeons, to their food
 Collected, blade or tares, without their pride
 Accustom'd, and in still and quiet sort,
 If aught alarm them, suddenly desert
 Their meal, assail'd by more important care:
 So I that new-come troop beheld, the song
 Deserting, hasten to the mountain's side,
 As one who goes, yet, where he tends, knows not.

Nor with less hurried step did we depart.

[The poet relates in thirty-three cantos what he saw in this middle realm of the departed. On the banks of Lethe, whose waters take away the memory of sin, a vision of the Church's glory is shown to him, and the blessed lady Beatrice appears amid a shower of lilies cast upwards by the saintly band.]

I have beheld, ere now, at break of day,
 The eastern clime all roseate; and the sky
 Oppos'd, one deep and beautiful serene;
 And the sun's face so shaded, and with mists

Attemper'd, at his rising, that the eye
 Long while endur'd the sight: thus, in a cloud,
 Of flowers, that from those hands angelic rose,
 And down within and outside of the car,
 Fell showering, in white veil with olive wreath'd,
 A virgin in my view appear'd, beneath
 Green mantle, rob'd in hue of living flame:
 And o'er my spirit, that so long a time
 Had from her presence felt no shudd'ring dread,
 Albeit mine eyes discern'd her not, there mov'd
 A hidden virtue from her, at whose touch
 The power of ancient love was strong within me.

[Beatrice reproves Dante for his life of sin after her death, and the poet, deeply repentant, is prepared for his vision of Paradise. He is led to the water of the stream Eunoe which restores the memory of good—as Lethe took away the memory of sin—and, in his own words:

I returned
 From the most holy wave, regenerate,
 E'en as new plants renewed with foliage new,
 Pure and made apt for mounting to the stars.]

PARADISE

[Dante's vision of the spheres of Paradise is related in thirty-three cantos. At the end he sees all the company of Heaven in the form here described.]

From CANTO XXXI

In fashion, as a snow-white rose, lay then
 Before my view the saintly multitude,
 Which in his own blood Christ espous'd. Meanwhile
 That other host, that soar aloft to gaze
 And celebrate his glory, whom they love,
 Hover'd around; and, like a troop of bees,
 Amid the vernal sweets alighting now,
 Now, clustering, where their fragrant labour glows,
 Flew downward to the mighty flow'r, or rose
 From the redundant petals, streaming back
 Unto the stedfast dwelling of their joy.
 Faces had they of flame, and wings of gold;
 The rest was whiter than the driven snow;



THE CAR OF THE GRYPHON

Botticelli



DANTE AND BEATRICE

Botticelli

And as they flitted down into the flower,
 From range to range, fanning their plumy loins,
 Whisper'd the peace and ardour, which they won
 From that soft winnowing. Shadow none, the vast
 Interposition of such numerous flight
 Cast, from above, upon the flower, or view
 Obstructed aught. For, through the universe,
 Wherever merited, celestial light
 Glides freely, and no obstacle prevents....

If the grim brood, from Arctic shores that roam'd,
 (Where Helice for ever, as she wheels,
 Sparkles a mother's fondness on her son)
 Stood in mute wonder 'mid the works of Rome,
 When to their view the Lateran arose
 In greatness more than earthly; I, who then
 From human to divine had past, from time
 Unto eternity, and out of Florence
 To justice and to truth, how might I choose
 But marvel too? 'Twixt gladness and amaze,
 In sooth no will had I to utter aught,
 Or hear. And, as a pilgrim, when he rests
 Within the temple of his vow, looks round
 In breathless awe, and hopes some time to tell
 Of all its goodly state: e'en so my eyes
 Cours'd up and down along the living light,
 Now low, and now aloft, and now around,
 Visiting every step. Looks I beheld,
 Where charity in soft persuasion sat,
 Smiles from within, and radiance from above,
 And, in each gesture, grace and honour high.

So rov'd my ken, and in its general form
 All Paradise survey'd...

* * * * *

[Dante is instructed to seek among the saintly circles for the Queen of Heaven. St Bernard, now his guide, thus addresses her:]

"O virgin mother, daughter of thy Son!
 Created beings all in lowliness
 Surpassing, as in height above them all,

* * * * *

Here kneeleth one,
 Who of all spirits hath review'd the state,
 From the world's lowest gap unto this height.
 Suppliant to thee he kneels, imploring grace
 For virtue yet more high, to lift his ken
 Toward the bliss supreme. And I, who ne'er
 Coveted sight, more fondly, for myself,
 Than now for him, my prayers to thee prefer
 (And pray they be not scant) that thou wouldst drive
 Each cloud of his mortality away;
 That on the sovran pleasure he may gaze.
 This also I entreat of thee, O queen!
 Who canst do what thou wilt! that in him thou
 Wouldst after all he hath beheld, preserve
 Affection sound, and human passions quell.
 Lo! where, with Beatrice, many a saint
 Stretch their clasp'd hands, in furtherance of my suit!"

[Dante is then permitted to see the Eternal Light, and with that revelation his vision ends.]

I, meanwhile, who drew
 Near to the limit, where all wishes end,
 The ardor of my wish (for so behov'd),
 Ended within me. Beck'ning smil'd the sage,
 That I should look aloft: but, ere he bade,
 Already of myself aloft I look'd;
 For visual strength, refining more and more,
 Bare me into the ray authential
 Of sovran light. Thenceforward, what I saw,
 Was not for words to speak, nor memory's self
 To stand against such outrage on her skill.
 As one, who from a dream awaken'd, straight,
 All he hath seen forgets; yet still retains
 Impression of the feeling in his dream;
 E'en such am I: for all the vision dies,
 As 'twere, away; and yet the sense of sweet,
 That sprang from it, still trickles in my heart.
 Thus in the sun-thaw is the snow unseal'd;
 Thus in the winds on flitting leaves was lost
 The Sybil's sentence. O eternal beam!

(Whose height what reach of mortal thought may soar?)
Yield me again some little particle
Of what thou then appearedst; give my tongue
Power, but to leave one sparkle of thy glory,
Unto the race to come, that shall not lose
The triumph wholly, if thou waken aught
Of memory in me, and endure to hear
The record sound in this unequal strain.

Such keenness from the living ray I met,
That, if mine eyes had turn'd away, methinks,
I had been lost; but, so embolden'd, on
I pass'd, as I remember, till my view
Hover'd the brink of dread infinitude.

O grace, unenvying of thy boon! that gav'st
Boldness to fix so earnestly my ken
On th' everlasting splendour, that I look'd,
While sight was unconsum'd; and, in that depth,
Saw in one volume clasp'd of love, whate'er
The universe unfolds....

With fixed heed, suspense and motionless,
Wondring I gaz'd; and admiration still
Was kindled, as I gaz'd. It may not be,
That one, who looks upon that light, can turn
To other object, willingly, his view.
For all the good, that will may covet, there
Is summ'd; and all, elsewhere defective found,
Complete. My tongue shall utter now, no more
E'en what remembrance keeps, than could the babe's
That yet is moisten'd at his mother's breast.
Not that the semblance of the living light
Was chang'd (that ever as at first remain'd)
But that my vision quickening, in that sole
Appearance, still new miracles descry'd,
And toil'd me with the change. In that abyss
Of radiance, clear and lofty, seem'd methought,
Three orbs of triple hue, clipt in one bound:
And, from another, one reflected seem'd,
As rainbow is from rainbow: and the third
Seem'd fire, breath'd equally from both. O speech!

How feeble and how faint art thou, to give
 Conception birth! Yet this to what I saw
 Is less than little. O Eternal Light!
 Sole in thyself that dwellest; and of thyself
 Sole understood, past, present, or to come!
 Thou smiledst: on that circling, which in thee
 Seem'd as reflected splendour, while I mus'd;
 For I therein, methought, in its own hue
 Beheld our image painted: stedfastly
 I therefore por'd upon the view. As one
 Who vers'd in geometric lore, would fain
 Measure the circle; and, though pondering long
 And deeply, that beginning, which he needs,
 Finds not; e'en such was I, intent to scan
 The novel wonder, and trace out the form,
 How to the circle fitted, and therein
 How plac'd; but the flight was not for my wing;
 Had not a flash darted athwart my mind,
 And, in the spleen, unfolded what it sought.

Here vigour fail'd the towering fantasy:
 But yet the will roll'd onward, like a wheel
 In even motion, by the Love impell'd,
 That moves the sun in heav'n and all the stars.

DE QUINCEY

THOMAS DE QUINCEY (1785-1859) was born at Manchester. He went to various schools, where he distinguished himself specially in Greek, and, after a period of wandering, including a time of great hardship in London, he passed on to Oxford. He made the acquaintance of such great literary persons as Wordsworth, Coleridge and Lamb, and presently settled in the Lake district where he wrote many articles for the magazines. He had begun to take opium for medicinal purposes, and the habit grew on him. A set of articles called *The Confessions of an English Opium Eater* made him famous. Among his other writings may be mentioned *The English Mail Coach*, *Suspiria de Profundis*, an *Autobiography* and some sketches of the literary persons he had known. He settled ultimately in Scotland, where he died. The passage that follows is taken from *Confessions*.

THE DREAMS OF AN OPIUM EATER

I remember about this time a little incident, which I mention because, trifling as it was, the reader will soon meet it again in

my dreams, which it influenced more fearfully than could be imagined. One day a Malay knocked at my door. What business a Malay could have to transact amongst the recesses of English mountains, is not my business to conjecture; but possibly he was on his road to a seaport—viz., Whitehaven, Workington, etc.—about forty miles distant.

The servant who opened the door to him was a young girl born and bred amongst the mountains, who had never seen an Asiatic dress of any sort: his turban, therefore, confounded her not a little; and as it turned out that *his* knowledge of English was exactly commensurate with *hers* of Malay, there seemed to be an impassable gulf fixed between all communication of ideas, if either party had happened to possess any. In this dilemma, the girl, recollecting the reputed learning of her master (and, doubtless, giving me credit for a knowledge of all the languages of the earth, besides, perhaps, a few of the lunar ones), came and gave me to understand that there was a sort of demon below, whom she clearly imagined that my art could exorcise from the house. The group which presented itself, arranged as it was by accident, though not very elaborate, took hold of my fancy and my eye more powerfully than any of the statuesque attitudes or groups exhibited in the ballets at the opera-house, though so ostentatiously complex. In a cottage kitchen, but not looking so much like *that* as a rustic hall of entrance, being panelled on the wall with dark wood, that from age and rubbing resembled oak, stood the Malay, his turban and loose trousers of dingy white relieved upon the dark panelling; he had placed himself nearer to the girl than she seemed to relish, though her native spirit of mountain intrepidity contended with the feeling of simple awe which her countenance expressed, as she gazed upon the tiger-cat before her. A more striking picture there could not be imagined, than the beautiful English face of the girl, and its exquisite bloom, together with her erect and independent attitude, contrasted with the sallow and bilious skin of the Malay, veneered with mahogany tints by climate and marine air, his small, fierce, restless eyes, thin lips, slavish gestures and adorations. Half-hidden by the ferocious-looking Malay, was a little child from a neighbouring cottage, who had crept in after him, and was now in the act of reverting its head and gazing upwards at the turban and the fiery eyes beneath it,

whilst with one hand he caught at the dress of the lovely girl for protection.

My knowledge of the Oriental tongues is not remarkably extensive, being, indeed, confined to two words—the Arabic word for barley, and the Turkish for opium. And, as I had no Malay dictionary, which might have helped me to a few words, I addressed him in some lines from the *Iliad*; considering that, of such languages as I possessed, the Greek, in point of longitude, came geographically nearest to an Oriental one. He worshipped me in a devout manner, and replied in what I suppose to have been Malay. In this way I saved my reputation as a linguist with my neighbours; for the Malay had no means of betraying the secret. He lay down upon the floor for about an hour, and then pursued his journey. On his departure, I presented him, *inter alia*, with a piece of opium. To him, as a native of the East, I could have no doubt that opium was not less familiar than his daily bread; and the expression of his face convinced me that it was. Nevertheless, I was struck with some little consternation when I saw him suddenly raise his hand to his mouth, and bolt the whole, divided into three pieces, at one mouthful. The quantity was enough to kill some half dozen dragoons, together with their horses, supposing neither bipeds nor quadrupeds to be regularly trained opium-eaters. I felt some alarm for the poor creature; but what could be done? I had given him the opium in pure compassion for his solitary life, since, if he had travelled on foot from London, it must be nearly three weeks since he could have exchanged a thought with any human being. Ought I to have violated the laws of hospitality by having him seized and drenched with an emetic, thus frightening him into a notion that we were going to sacrifice him to some English idol? No: there was clearly no help for it. The mischief, if any, was done. He took his leave, and for some days I felt anxious; but, as I never heard of any Malay, or of any man in a turban, being found dead in any part of the very slenderly peopled road between Grasmere and Whitehaven, I became satisfied that he was familiar with opium, and that I must doubtless have done him the service I designed, by giving one night of respite from the pains of wandering.

This incident I have digressed to mention, because this Malay (partly from the picturesque exhibition he assisted to frame,

partly from the anxiety I connected with his image for some days) fastened afterwards upon my fancy, and through *that* upon my dreams, bringing with him other Malays worse than himself, that ran "a-muck" at me, and led me into a world of nocturnal troubles....

But from this I now pass to what is the main subject of these latter Confessions—to the history and journal of what took place in my dreams; for these were the immediate and proximate cause of shadowy terrors that settled and brooded over my whole waking life.

The first notice I had of any important change going on in this part of my physical economy, was from the re-awaking of a state of eye oftentimes incident to childhood. I know not whether my reader is aware that many children have a power of painting, as it were, upon the darkness all sorts of phantoms; in some that power is simply a mechanic affection of the eye; others have a voluntary or semi-voluntary power to dismiss or summon such phantoms; or, as a child once said to me, when I questioned him on this matter, "I can tell them to go, and they go; but sometimes they come when I don't tell them to come." He had by one-half as unlimited a command over apparitions as a Roman centurion over his soldiers. In the middle of 1817 this faculty became increasingly distressing to me: at night, when I lay awake in bed, vast processions moved along continually in mournful pomp; friezes of never-ending stories, that to my feelings were as sad and solemn as stories drawn from times before *Œdipus* or *Priam*, before *Tyre*, before *Memphis*. And, concurrently with this, a corresponding change took place in my dreams; a theatre seemed suddenly opened and lighted up within my brain, which presented nightly spectacles of more than earthly splendour. And the four following facts may be mentioned, as noticeable at this time:—

I. That, as the creative state of the eye increased, a sympathy seemed to arise between the waking and the dreaming states of the brain in one point—that whatsoever I happened to call up and to trace by a voluntary act upon the darkness was very apt to transfer itself to my dreams; and at length I feared to exercise this faculty; for, as *Midas* turned all things to gold that yet baffled his hopes and defrauded his human desires, so whatsoever things capable of being visually represented I did but think of in the darkness immediately shaped themselves into phantoms for

the eye; and, by a process apparently no less inevitable, when thus once traced in faint and visionary colours, like writings in sympathetic ink, they were drawn out by the fierce chemistry of my dreams, into insufferable splendour that fretted my heart.

2. This and all other changes in my dreams were accompanied by deep-seated anxiety and funereal melancholy, such as are wholly incommunicable by words. I seemed every night to descend—not metaphorically, but literally to descend—into chasms and sunless abysses, depths below depths, from which it seemed hopeless that I could ever re-ascend. Nor did I, by waking, feel that I *had* re-ascended. Why should I dwell upon this? For indeed the state of gloom which attended these gorgeous spectacles, amounting at last to utter darkness, as of some suicidal despondency, cannot be approached by words.

3. The sense of space, and in the end the sense of time, were both powerfully affected. Buildings, landscapes, etc., were exhibited in proportions so vast as the bodily eye is not fitted to receive. Space swelled, and was amplified to an extent of unutterable and self-repeating infinity. This disturbed me very much less than the vast expansion of time. Sometimes I seemed to have lived for seventy or a hundred years in one night; nay, sometimes had feelings representative of a duration far beyond the limits of any human experience.

4. The minutest incidents of childhood, or forgotten scenes of later years, were often revived. I could not be said to recollect them; for, if I had been told of them when waking, I should not have been able to acknowledge them as parts of my past experience. But, placed as they were before me in dreams like intuitions, and clothed in all their evanescent circumstances and accompanying feelings, I *recognised* them instantaneously. I was once told by a near relative of mine, that having in her childhood fallen into a river, and being on the very verge of death but for the assistance which reached her at the last critical moment, she saw in a moment her whole life, clothed in its forgotten incidents, arrayed before her as in a mirror, not successively, but simultaneously; and she had a faculty developed as suddenly for comprehending the whole and every part. This, from some opium experiences, I can believe; I have, indeed, seen the same thing asserted twice in modern books, and accompanied by a remark which probably is

true—viz., that the dread book of account, which the Scriptures speak of, is, in fact, the mind of each individual. Of this, at least, I feel assured, that there is no such thing as ultimate *forgetting*; traces once impressed upon the memory are indestructible; a thousand accidents may and will interpose a veil between our present consciousness and the secret inscriptions on the mind. Accidents of the same sort will also rend away this veil. But alike, whether veiled or unveiled, the inscription remains for ever; just as the stars seem to withdraw before the common light of day, whereas, in fact, we all know that it is the light which is drawn over them as a veil; and that they are waiting to be revealed, whenever the obscuring daylight itself shall have withdrawn.

Having noticed these four facts as memorably distinguishing my dreams from those of health, I shall now cite a few illustrative cases; and shall then cite such others as I remember, in any order that may give them most effect as pictures to the reader.

I had been in youth, and ever since, for occasional amusement, a great reader of Livy, whom I confess that I prefer, both for style and matter, to any other of the Roman historians; and I had often felt as solemn and appalling sounds, emphatically representative of Roman majesty, the two words so often occurring in Livy, *Consul Romanus*; especially when the consul is introduced in his military character. I mean to say, that the words king, sultan, regent, etc., or any other titles of those who embody in their own persons the collective majesty of a great people, had less power over my reverential feelings. I had also, though no great reader of history, made myself critically familiar with one period of English history—viz., the period of the Parliamentary War—having been attracted by the moral grandeur of some who figured in that day, and by the interesting memoirs which survive those unquiet times. Both these parts of my lighter reading, having furnished me often with matter of reflection, now furnished me with matter for my dreams. Often I used to see, after painting upon the blank darkness a sort of rehearsal whilst waking, a crowd of ladies, and perhaps a festival and dances. And I heard it said, or I said to myself, “These are English ladies from the unhappy times of Charles I. These are the wives and daughters of those who met in peace, and sat at the same tables, and were allied by marriage or by blood; and yet, after a certain day in

August 1642, never smiled upon each other again, nor met but in the field of battle; and at Marston Moor, at Newbury, or at Naseby, cut asunder all ties of love by the cruel sabre, and washed away in blood the memory of ancient friendship." The ladies danced, and looked as lovely as at the court of George IV. Yet even in my dream I knew that they had been in the grave for nearly two centuries. This pageant would suddenly dissolve; and, at a clapping of hands, would be heard the heart-shaking sound of *Consul Romanus*; and immediately came "sweeping by" in gorgeous paludaments, Paullus or Marius, girt around by a company of centurions, with the crimson tunic¹ hoisted on a spear, and followed by the *alalagmos*² of the Roman legions.

Many years ago, when I was looking over Piranesi's *Antiquities of Rome*, Coleridge, then standing by, described to me a set of plates from that artist, called his *Dreams*, and which record the scenery of his own visions during the delirium of a fever. Some of these (I describe only from memory of Coleridge's account) represented vast Gothic halls; on the floor of which stood mighty engines and machinery, wheels, cables, catapults, etc., expressive of enormous power put forth, or resistance overcome. Creeping along the sides of the walls, you perceived a staircase; and upon this, groping his way upwards, was Piranesi himself. Follow the stairs a little farther, and you perceive them reaching an abrupt termination, without any balustrade, and allowing no step onwards to him who should reach the extremity, except into the depths below. Whatever is to become of poor Piranesi, at least you suppose that his labours must now in some way terminate. But raise your eyes, and behold a second flight of stairs still higher, on which again Piranesi is perceived, by this time standing on the very brink of the abyss. Once again elevate your eye, and a still more ærial flight is descried; and there, again, is the delirious Piranesi, busy on his aspiring labours: and so on, until the unfinished stairs and hopeless Piranesi both are lost in the upper gloom of the hall. With the same power of endless growth and self-production did my architecture proceed in dreams. In the early stage of the malady, the splendours of my dreams were

¹ '*The crimson tunic*':—The signal which announced a day of battle.

² '*Alalagmos*':—A word expressing collectively the gathering of the Roman war-cries—*Aldla, Aldla!*



A DREAM PRISON

Carceri, Plate 8

Piranesi



indeed chiefly architectural; and I beheld such pomp of cities and palaces as never yet was beheld by the waking eye, unless in the clouds. From a great modern poet (Wordsworth) I cite the part of a passage which describes, as an appearance actually beheld in the clouds, what in many of its circumstances I saw frequently in my sleep:—

The appearance, instantaneously disclosed,
Was of a mighty city—boldly say
A wilderness of building, sinking far
And self-withdrawn into a wondrous depth,
Far sinking into splendour without end!
Fabric it seem'd of diamond and of gold,
With alabaster domes and silver spires,
And blazing terrace upon terrace, high
Uplifted; here, serene pavilions bright,
In avenues disposed; there towers begirt
With battlements that on their restless fronts
Bore stars—illumination of all gems!
By earthly nature had the effect been wrought
Upon the dark materials of the storm
Now pacified; on them, and on the coves,
And mountain-steeps and summits, whereunto
The vapours had receded—taking there
Their station under a cerulean sky.

The sublime circumstance—"that on their *restless* fronts bore stars"—might have been copied from my own architectural dreams, so often did it occur....

To my architecture succeeded dreams of lakes and silvery expanses of water: these haunted me so much, that I feared lest some dropsical state or tendency of the brain might thus be making itself (to use a metaphysical word) *objective*; and that the sentient organ might be projecting itself as its own object. For two months I suffered greatly in my head—a part of my bodily structure which had hitherto been so clear from all touch or taint of weakness (physically, I mean), that I used to say of it, as the last Lord Orford said of his stomach, that it seemed likely to survive the rest of my person. Till now, I had never felt a headache even, or any the slightest pain, except rheumatic pains caused by my own folly.

The waters gradually changed their character—from translucent lakes, shining like mirrors, they became seas and oceans. And now came a tremendous change, which, unfolding itself slowly like a scroll, through many months, promised an abiding torment; and, in fact, it never left me, though recurring more or less intermittently. Hitherto the human face had often mixed in my dreams, but not despotically, nor with any special power of tormenting. But now that affection which I have called the tyranny of the human face, began to unfold itself. Perhaps some part of my London life (the searching for Ann amongst fluctuating crowds) might be answerable for this. Be that as it may, now it was that upon the rocking waters of the ocean the human face began to reveal itself; the sea appeared paved with innumerable faces, upturned to the heavens; faces, imploring, wrathful, despairing; faces that surged upwards by thousands, by myriads, by generations: infinite was my agitation; my mind tossed, as it seemed, upon the billowy ocean, and weltered upon the weltering waves.

May 1818.—The Malay has been a fearful enemy for months. Every night, through his means, I have been transported into Asiatic scenery. I know not whether others share in my feelings on this point; but I have often thought that if I were compelled to forego England, and to live in China, among Chinese manners and modes of life and scenery, I should go mad. The causes of my horror lie deep, and some of them must be common to others. Southern Asia, in general, is the seat of awful images and associations. As the cradle of the human race, if on no other ground, it would have a dim, reverential feeling connected with it. But there are other reasons. No man can pretend that the wild, barbarous, and capricious superstitions of Africa, or of savage tribes elsewhere, affect him in the way that he is affected by the ancient, monumental, cruel, and elaborate religions of Hindostan. The mere antiquity of Asiatic things, of their institutions, histories, above all, of their mythologies, etc., is so impressive, that to me the vast age of the race and name overpowers the sense of youth in the individual. A young Chinese seems to me an antediluvian man renewed. Even Englishmen, though not bred in any knowledge of such institutions, cannot but shudder at the mystic sublimity of *castes* that have flowed apart, and refused to mix, through such immemorial tracts of time; nor can any man fail to

be awed by the sanctity of the Ganges, or by the very name of the Euphrates. It contributes much to these feelings that South-eastern Asia is, and has been for thousands of years, the part of the earth most swarming with human life, the great *officina gentium*. Man is a weed in those regions. The vast empires, also, into which the enormous population of Asia has always been cast give a further sublimity to the feelings associated with all oriental names or images. In China, over and above what it has in common with the rest of Southern Asia, I am terrified by the modes of life, by the manners, by the barrier of utter abhorrence placed between myself and *them*, by counter-sympathies deeper than I can analyse. I could sooner live with lunatics, with vermin, with crocodiles or snakes. All this, and much more than I can say, the reader must enter into before he can comprehend the unimaginable horror which these dreams of oriental imagery and mythological tortures impressed upon me. Under the connecting feeling of tropical heat and vertical sunlights, I brought together all creatures, birds, beasts, reptiles, all trees and plants, usages and appearances, that are found in all tropical regions, and assembled them together in China or Hindostan. From kindred feelings, I soon brought Egypt and her gods under the same law. I was stared at, hooted at, grinned at, chattered at, by monkeys, by paroquets, by cockatoos. I ran into pagodas, and was fixed for centuries at the summit, or in secret rooms; I was the idol; I was the priest; I was worshipped; I was sacrificed. I fled from the wrath of Brahma through all the forests of Asia; Vishnu hated me; Siva lay in wait for me. I came suddenly upon Isis and Osiris: I had done a deed, they said, which the ibis and the crocodile trembled at. Thousands of years I lived and was buried in stone coffins, with mummies and sphinxes, in narrow chambers at the heart of eternal pyramids. I was kissed, with cancerous kisses by crocodiles, and was laid, confounded with all unutterable abortions, amongst reeds and Nilotic mud.

Some slight abstraction I thus attempt of my oriental dreams, which filled me always with such amazement at the monstrous scenery, that horror seemed absorbed for a while in sheer astonishment. Sooner or later came a reflux of feeling that swallowed up the astonishment, and left me, not so much in terror, as in hatred and abomination of what I saw. Over every form, and threat,

and punishment, and dim sightless incarceration, brooded a killing sense of eternity and infinity. Into these dreams only it was, with one or two slight exceptions, that any circumstances of physical horror entered. All before had been moral and spiritual terrors. But here the main agents were ugly birds, or snakes, or crocodiles, especially the last. The cursed crocodile became to me the object of more horror than all the rest. I was compelled to live with him; and (as was always the case in my dreams) for centuries. Sometimes I escaped, and found myself in Chinese houses. All the feet of the tables, sofas, etc., soon became instinct with life: the abominable head of the crocodile, and his leering eyes, looked out at me, multiplied into ten thousand repetitions; and I stood loathing and fascinated. So often did this hideous reptile haunt my dreams, that many times the very same dream was broken up in the very same way: I heard gentle voices speaking to me (I hear everything when I am sleeping), and instantly I awoke; it was broad noon, and my children were standing, hand in hand, at my bedside, come to show me their coloured shoes, or new frocks, or to let me see them dressed for going out. No experience was so awful to me, and at the same time so pathetic, as this abrupt translation from the darkness of the infinite to the gaudy summer air of highest noon, and from the unutterable abortions of mis-created gigantic vermin to the sight of infancy, and innocent *human* natures.

June 1819.—I have had occasion to remark, at various periods of my life, that the deaths of those whom we love, and, indeed, the contemplation of death generally, is (*cæteris paribus*) more affecting in summer than in any other season of the year. And the reasons are these three, I think: first, that the visible heavens in summer appear far higher, more distant, and (if such a solecism may be excused) more infinite; the clouds by which chiefly the eye expounds the distance of the blue pavilion stretched over our heads are in summer more voluminous, more massed, and are accumulated in far grander and more towering piles; secondly, the light and the appearances of the declining and the setting sun are much more fitted to be types and characters of the infinite; and, thirdly (which is the main reason), the exuberant and riotous prodigality of life naturally forces the mind more powerfully upon the antagonist thought of death, and the wintery sterility of the

grave. For it may be observed generally, that wherever two thoughts stand related to each other by a law of antagonism, and exist, as it were, by mutual repulsion, they are apt to suggest each other. On these accounts it is that I find it impossible to banish the thought of death when I am walking alone in the endless days of summer; and any particular death, if not actually more affecting, at least haunts my mind more obstinately and besiegingly, in that season. Perhaps this cause, and a slight incident which I omit, might have been the immediate occasions of the following dream, to which, however, a predisposition must always have existed in my mind; but, having been once roused, it never left me, and split into a thousand fantastic variations, which often suddenly re-combined; locked back into startling unity, and restored the original dream.

I thought that it was a Sunday morning in May; that it was Easter Sunday, and as yet very early in the morning. I was standing, as it seemed to me, at the door of my own cottage. Right before me lay the very scene which could really be commanded from that situation, but exalted, as was usual, and solemnised by the power of dreams. There were the same mountains, and the same lovely valley at their feet; but the mountains were raised to more than Alpine height, and there was interspace far larger between them of savannahs and forest lawns; the hedges were rich with white roses; and no living creature was to be seen, excepting that in the green churchyard there were cattle tranquilly reposing upon the verdant graves, and particularly round about the grave of a child whom I had once tenderly loved, just as I had really beheld them, a little before sunrise, in the same summer when that child died. I gazed upon the well-known scene, and I said to myself, "It yet wants much of sunrise; and it is Easter Sunday; and that is the day on which they celebrate the first-fruits of Resurrection. I will walk abroad; old griefs shall be forgotten to-day: for the air is cool and still, and the hills are high, and stretch away to heaven; and the churchyard is as verdant as the forest lawns, and the forest lawns are as quiet as the churchyard; and with the dew I can wash the fever from my forehead; and then I shall be unhappy no longer." I turned, as if to open my garden gate, and immediately I saw upon the left a scene far different; but which yet the power of dreams had reconciled into

harmony. The scene was an oriental one; and there also it was Easter Sunday, and very early in the morning. And at a vast distance were visible, as a stain upon the horizon, the domes and cupolas of a great city—an image or faint abstraction, caught perhaps in childhood from some picture of Jerusalem. And not a bow-shot from me, upon a stone, shaded by Judean palms, there sat a woman; and I looked, and it was—Ann! She fixed her eyes upon me earnestly; and I said to her at length, “So then, I have found you at last.” I waited; but she answered me not a word. Her face was the same as when I saw it last; the same, and yet, again, how different! Seventeen years ago, when the lamp-light of mighty London fell upon her face, as for the last time I saw her, her eyes were streaming with tears. The tears were now no longer seen. Sometimes she seemed altered; yet again sometimes *not* altered; and hardly older. Her looks were tranquil, but with unusual solemnity of expression, and I now gazed upon her with some awe. Suddenly her countenance grew dim; and, turning to the mountains, I perceived vapours rolling between us; in a moment all had vanished; thick darkness came on; and in the twinkling of an eye I was far away from mountains and by lamp-light in London, walking again with Ann—just as we had walked, when both children, eighteen years before, along the endless terraces of Oxford Street.

Then suddenly would come a dream of far different character—a tumultuous dream—commencing with a music such as now I often heard in sleep—music of preparation and of awakening suspense. The undulations of fast-gathering tumults were like the opening of the Coronation Anthem; and, like *that*, gave the feeling of a multitudinous movement, of infinite cavalcades filing off, and the tread of innumerable armies. The morning was come of a mighty day—a day of crisis and of ultimate hope for human nature, then suffering mysterious eclipse, and labouring in some dread extremity. Somewhere, but I knew not where—somehow, but I knew not how—by some beings, but I knew not by whom—a battle, a strife, an agony, was travelling through all its stages—was evolving itself, like the catastrophe of some mighty drama, with which my sympathy was the more insupportable, from deepening confusion as to its local scene, its cause, its nature, and its undecipherable issue. I (as is usual in dreams where, of necessity,

we make ourselves central to every movement) had the power, and yet had not the power, to decide it. I had the power, if I could raise myself to will it; and yet again had not the power, for the weight of twenty Atlantics was upon me, or the oppression of inexpressible guilt. "Deeper than ever plummet sounded," I lay inactive. Then, like a chorus, the passion deepened. Some greater interest was at stake, some mightier cause, than ever yet the sword had pleaded, or trumpet had proclaimed. Then came sudden alarms; hurrys to and fro; trepidations of innumerable fugitives, I knew not whether from the good cause or the bad; darkness and lights; tempest and human faces; and at last, with the sense that all was lost, female forms, and the features that were worth all the world to me; and but a moment allowed—and clasped hands, with heart-breaking partings, and then—everlasting farewells! and, with a sigh such as the caves of hell sighed when the incestuous mother uttered the abhorred name of Death, the sound was reverberated—everlasting farewells! and again, and yet again reverberated—everlasting farewells!

And I awoke in struggles, and cried aloud, "I will sleep no more!"

Now, at last, I had become awestruck at the approach of sleep, under the condition of visions so afflicting, and so intensely life-like as those which persecuted my phantom-haunted brain. More and more also I felt violent palpitations in some internal region, such as are commonly, but erroneously, called palpitations of the heart—being, as I suppose, referable exclusively to derangements in the stomach. These were evidently increasing rapidly in frequency and in strength. Naturally, therefore, on considering how important my life had become to others besides myself, I became alarmed; and I paused seasonably; but with a difficulty that is past all description. Either way it seemed as though death had, in military language, "thrown himself astride of my path." Nothing short of mortal anguish, in a physical sense, it seemed, to wean myself from opium; yet, on the other hand, death through overwhelming nervous terrors—death by brain fever or by lunacy—seemed too certainly to besiege the alternative course. Fortunately I had still so much of firmness left as to face that choice, which, with most of instant suffering, showed in the far distance a possibility of final escape.

This possibility was realised: I *did* accomplish my escape. And the issue of that particular stage in my opium experiences (for such it was—simply a provisional stage, that paved the way subsequently for many milder stages, to which gradually my constitutional system accommodated itself) was, pretty nearly in the following words, communicated to my readers in the earliest edition of these Confessions:—

I triumphed. But infer not, reader, from this word "*triumphed*," a condition of joy or exultation. Think of me as of one, even when four months had passed, still agitated, writhing, throbbing, palpitating, shattered; and much, perhaps, in the situation of him who has been racked, as I collect the torments of that state from the affecting account of them left by a most innocent sufferer (in the time of James I). Meantime, I derived no benefit from any medicine whatever, except ammoniated tincture of valerian. The moral of the narrative is addressed to the opium-eater; and therefore, of necessity, limited in its application. If he is taught to fear and tremble, enough has been effected. But he may say that the issue of my case is at least a proof that opium, after an eighteen years' use, and an eight years' abuse of its powers, may still be renounced; and that he may chance to bring to the task greater energy than I did, or that, with a stronger constitution, he may obtain the same results with less. This may be true; I would not presume to measure the efforts of other men by my own. Heartily I wish him more resolution; heartily I wish him an equal success. Nevertheless, I had motives external to myself which he may unfortunately want; and these supplied me with conscientious supports, such as merely selfish interests might fail in supplying to a mind debilitated by opium.

Lord Bacon conjectures that it may be as painful to be born as to die. That seems probable; and, during the whole period of diminishing the opium, I had the torments of a man passing out of one mode of existence into another, and liable to the mixed or the alternate pains of birth and death. The issue was not death, but a sort of physical regeneration; and I may add, that ever since, at intervals, I have had a restoration of more than youthful spirits.

One memorial of my former condition nevertheless remains: my dreams are not calm; the dread swell and agitation of the storm have not wholly subsided; the legions that encamped in them

are drawing off, but not departed; my sleep is still tumultuous; and, like the gates of Paradise to our first parents when looking back from afar, it is still (in the tremendous line of Milton)—

With dreadful faces thronged and fiery arms.

KEATS

JOHN KEATS (1795–1821) was the son of the head ostler in a livery stable at the sign of the Swan and Hoop, Finsbury. He was born there in October, 1795, and educated at an Enfield school. It was intended that he should be a doctor and he became a medical student at Guy's and St Thomas's Hospital. He was drawn, however, to literature, and, encouraged by admiring friends, he wrote and published a volume of verses in 1817. This was followed in the next year by *Endymion*, a long poem; and in 1820 appeared a volume containing his best work, *Lamia, Isabella*, the *Ode to a Nightingale* and other poems. Keats fell ill with consumption and left England to seek health in Italy. He died in Rome at the age of twenty-five. His work had been unfairly attacked by certain reviewers, and Shelley, his fellow-poet, was inspired to write in his defence a noble poem called *Adonais*, which will for ever unite the names of the young poets.

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
 My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
 Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
 One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
 'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
 But being too happy in thy happiness,—
 That thou, light-wingéd Dryad of the trees,
 In some melodious plot
 Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
 Singest of summer in full-throated ease.
 O for a draught of vintage! that hath been
 Cool'd a long age in the deep-delvéd earth,
 Tasting of Flora and the country-green,
 Dance, and Provençal song, and sun-burnt mirth!
 O for a beaker full of the warm South,
 Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
 With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
 And purple-stainéd mouth;
 That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
 And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
 What thou among the leaves hast never known,
 The weariness, the fever, and the fret
 Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
 Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs,
 Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
 Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
 And leaden-eyed despairs,
 Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
 Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
 Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
 But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
 Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
 Already with thee! tender is the night,
 And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
 Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays;
 But here there is no light
 Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
 Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
 Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
 But, in embalméd darkness, guess each sweet
 Wherewith the seasonable month endows
 The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
 White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
 Fast-fading violets cover'd up in leaves;
 And mid-May's eldest child
 The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
 The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Darkling I listen; and for many a time
 I have been half in love with easeful Death,
 Call'd him soft names in many a muséd rhyme,
 To take into the air my quiet breath;
 Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
 To cease upon the midnight with no pain,

While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
 In such an ecstasy!
 Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
 To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
 No hungry generations tread thee down;
 The voice I hear this passing night was heard
 In ancient days by emperor and clown:
 Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
 Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
 She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
 The same that oft-times hath
 Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
 Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
 To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
 Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
 As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.
 Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
 Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
 Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
 In the next valley-glades:
 Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
 Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep?

SHELLEY

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY (1792–1822) was born near Horsham in Sussex, the son of a county gentleman. He was educated at Eton and at Oxford, whence he was sent down after a year. He wrote verses and romances at an early age, and his pen was always busy with poems, and with pamphlets in favour of social reform. Like Byron, with whom he was on terms of friendship, Shelley lived much in Italy, where he wrote some of his best poems and several delightful descriptive letters. Among his works in verse may be named *Prometheus Unbound*, *Hellas*, *Adonais*, the *Ode to the West Wind* and *To a Skylark*. His shorter poems include some of the loveliest lyrics in our language. Shelley was drowned when his schooner, the *Ariel*, was wrecked by a sudden storm in the bay of Spezzia. His body was washed ashore, and burnt in the presence of Byron and Leigh Hunt; the ashes were

buried at Rome in the cemetery where lies the body of Keats. Shelley, a high-minded and sensitive poet full of love for mankind, endured much suffering and misunderstanding. Like the West Wind, he was "tameless and swift and proud."

ODE TO THE WEST WIND

O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
 Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
 Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,
 Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
 Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou
 Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed
 The wingéd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
 Each like a corpse within its grave, until
 Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow
 Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
 (Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
 With living hues and odours plain and hill:
 Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
 Destroyer and Preserver; Hear, oh, hear!

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's commotion,
 Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
 Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean,
 Angels of rain and lightning; there are spread
 On the blue surface of thine æry surge,
 Like the bright hair uplifted from the head
 Of some fierce Maenad, ev'n from the dim verge
 Of the horizon to the zenith's height—
 The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge
 Of the dying year, to which this closing night
 Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
 Vaulted with all thy congregated might
 Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere
 Black rain, and fire, and hail, will burst: oh, hear!

Thou who didst waken from his summer-dreams,
 The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
 Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,
 Beside a pumice isle in Baiae's bay,

And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,
All overgrown with azure moss and flowers
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers
Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know
Thy voice, and suddenly grow grey with fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves: oh, hear!

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share
The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than Thou, O uncontrollable! If even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be
The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip the skiey speed
Scarce seemed a vision, I would ne'er have striven
As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
Oh, lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!
A heavy weight of hours has chain'd and bowed
One too like thee: tameless, and swift, and proud.

Make me thy lyre, ev'n as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies
Will take from both a deep autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,
My spirit! be thou me, impetuous one!
Drive my dead thoughts over the universe
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth!
And, by the incantation of this verse,
Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips to unawakened earth
The trumpet of a prophecy! O, Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

CHARLES LAMB

CHARLES LAMB (1775–1834) was born in the Temple, London, and educated at Christ's Hospital—the Bluecoat school, where he was a schoolfellow of Coleridge, long his friend. Charles was a clerk in the India House, and devoted his spare time to the joys of literature. He read deeply in the works of our older writers. His own early writings in prose and verse are not important; but, later, he and his sister Mary wrote together one of the most popular of English books, *Tales from Shakespeare*. Lamb's finest work is contained in two series of *Essays of Elia*, delightful, whimsical and eloquent papers, unequalled save by his own letters. He died at Edmonton. In life, Lamb was the centre of a circle of friends; since his death he has become the most beloved of all writers. The passage that follows is part of one of the *Essays of Elia*.

THE INNER TEMPLE

I was born, and passed the first seven years of my life, in the Temple. Its church, its halls, its gardens, its fountain, its river, I had almost said—for in those young years, what was this king of rivers to me but a stream that watered our pleasant places?—these are of my oldest recollections. I repeat, to this day, no verses to myself more frequently, or with kindlier emotion, than those of Spenser, where he speaks of this spot,

There when they came, whereas those bricky towers,
The which on Themmes brode aged back doth ride,
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,
There whylome wont the Templer knights to bide,
Till they decayd through pride.

Indeed it is the most elegant spot in the metropolis. What a transition for a countryman visiting London for the first time—the passing from the crowded Strand or Fleet-street, by unexpected avenues, into its magnificent ample squares, its classic green recesses! What a cheerful, liberal look hath that portion of it, which, from three sides, overlooks the greater garden: that goodly pile

Of building strong, albeit of Paper hight,

confronting, with massy contrast, the lighter, older, more fantastically shrouded one, named of Harcourt, with the cheerful Crown-office Row (place of my kindly engendure), right opposite the stately stream, which washes the garden-foot with her yet scarcely

trade-polluted waters, and seems but just weaned from her Twickenham Naiades! a man would give something to have been born in such places. What a collegiate aspect has that fine Elizabethan hall, where the fountain plays, which I have made to rise and fall, how many times! to the astoundment of the young urchins, my contemporaries, who, not being able to guess at its recondite machinery, were almost tempted to hail the wondrous work as magic! What an antique air had the now almost effaced sun-dials, with their moral inscriptions, seeming coevals with that Time which they measured, and to take their revelations of its flight immediately from heaven, holding correspondence with the fountain of light! How would the dark line steal imperceptibly on, watched by the eye of childhood, eager to detect its movement, never caught, nice as an evanescent cloud, or the first arrests of sleep!

Ah! yet doth beauty like a dial-hand
Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived!

What a dead thing is a clock, with its ponderous embowelments of lead and brass, its pert or solemn dulness of communication, compared with the simple altar-like structure, and silent heart-language of the old dial! It stood as the garden god of Christian gardens. Why is it almost every where vanished? If its business-use be superseded by more elaborate inventions, its moral uses, its beauty, might have pleaded for its continuance. It spoke of moderate labours, of pleasures not protracted after sun-set, of temperance, and good-hours. It was the primitive clock, the horologe of the first world. Adam could scarce have missed it in Paradise. It was the measure appropriate for sweet plants and flowers to spring by, for the birds to apportion their silver warblings by, for flocks to pasture and be led to fold by. The shepherd "carved it out quaintly in the sun"; and, turning philosopher by the very occupation, provided it with mottos more touching than tombstones. It was a pretty device of the gardener, recorded by Marvell, who, in the days of artificial gardening, made a dial out of herbs and flowers. I must quote his verses a little higher up, for they are full, as all his serious poetry was, of a witty delicacy. They will not come in awkwardly, I hope, in a talk of fountains and sun-dials. He is speaking of sweet garden scenes:

What wondrous life is this I lead !
 Ripe apples drop about my head.
 The luscious clusters of the vine
 Upon my mouth do crush their wine.
 The nectarine, and curious peach,
 Into my hands themselves do reach.
 Stumbling on melons, as I pass,
 Insnared with flowers, I fall on grass.
 Meanwhile the mind from pleasure less
 Withdraws into its happiness.
 The mind, that ocean, where each kind
 Does straight its own resemblance find ;
 Yet it creates, transcending these,
 Far other worlds, and other seas ;
 Annihilating all that's made
 To a green thought in a green shade.
 Here at the fountain's sliding foot,
 Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,
 Casting the body's vest aside,
 My soul into the boughs does glide :
 There, like a bird, it sits and sings,
 Then whets and claps its silver wings :
 And, till prepared for longer flight,
 Waves in its plumes the various light.
 How well the skilful gardner drew,
 Of flowers and herbs, this dial new !
 Where, from above, the milder sun
 Does through a fragrant zodiac run :
 And, as it works, the industrious bee
 Computes its time as well as we.
 How could such sweet and wholesome hours
 Be reckon'd, but with herbs and flowers¹ ?

The artificial fountains of the metropolis are, in like manner, fast vanishing. Most of them are dried up, or bricked over. Yet, where one is left, as in that little green nook behind the South-Sea House, what a freshness it gives to the dreary pile ! Four little winged marble boys used to play their virgin fancies, spouting out ever fresh streams from their innocent-wanton lips, in the square of Lincoln's-inn, when I was no bigger than they were

¹ From a copy of verses entitled *The Garden*.

figured. They are gone, and the spring choked up. The fashion, they tell me, is gone by, and these things are esteemed childish. Why not then gratify children, by letting them stand? Lawyers, I suppose, were children once. They are awakening images to them at least. Why must every thing smack of man, and mannish? Is the world all grown up? Is childhood dead? Or is there not in the bosoms of the wisest and the best some of the child's heart left, to respond to its earliest enchantments? The figures were grotesque. Are the stiff-wigged living figures, that still flutter and chatter about that area, less gothic in appearance? or is the splutter of their hot rhetoric one half so refreshing and innocent as the little cool playful streams those exploded cherubs uttered?

They have lately gothicised the entrance to the Inner Temple-hall, and the library front, to assimilate them, I suppose, to the body of the hall, which they do not at all resemble. What is become of the winged horse that stood over the former? a stately arms! and who has removed those frescoes of the Virtues, which Italianized the end of the Paper-buildings?—my first hint of allegory! They must account to me for these things, which I miss so greatly.

The terrace is, indeed, left, which we used to call the parade; but the traces are passed away of the footsteps which made its pavement awful! It is become common and profane. The old benchers had it almost sacred to themselves, in the forepart of the day at least. They might not be sided or jostled. Their air and dress asserted the parade. You left wide spaces betwixt you, when you passed them. We walk on even terms with their successors. The roguish eye of J. .ll, ever ready to be delivered of a jest, almost invites a stranger to vie a repartee with it. But what insolent familiar durst have mated Thomas Coventry?—whose person was a quadrate, his step massy and elephantine, his face square as the lion's, his gait peremptory and path-keeping, indivertible from his way as a moving column, the scarecrow of his inferiors, the brow-beater of equals and superiors, who made a solitude of children wherever he came, for they fled his insufferable presence, as they would have shunned an Elisha bear. His growl was as thunder in their ears, whether he spake to them in mirth or in rebuke, his invitatory notes being, indeed, of all, the most repulsive and horrid. Clouds of snuff, aggravating the natural

terrors of his speech, broke from each majestic nostril, darkening the air. He took it, not by pinches, but a palmful at once, diving for it under the mighty flaps of his old-fashioned waistcoat pocket; his waistcoat red and angry, his coat dark rappee, tintured by dye original, and by adjuncts, with buttons of obsolete gold. And so he paced the terrace....

Fantastic forms, whither are ye fled? Or, if the like of you exist, why exist they no more for me? Ye inexplicable, half-understood appearances, why comes in reason to tear away the preternatural mist, bright or gloomy, that enshrouded you? Why make ye so sorry a figure in my relation, who made up to me—to my childish eyes—the mythology of the Temple? In those days I saw Gods, as “old men covered with a mantle,” walking upon the earth. Let the dreams of classic idolatry perish,—extinct be the fairies and fairy trumpery of legendary fabling,—in the heart of childhood, there will, for ever, spring up a well of innocent or wholesome superstition—the seeds of exaggeration will be busy there, and vital—from every-day forms educing the unknown and the uncommon. In that little Goshen there will be light, when the grown world flounders about in the darkness of sense and materiality. While childhood, and while dreams, reducing childhood, shall be left, imagination shall not have spread her holy wings totally to fly the earth.

WORDSWORTH

ODE

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

I

There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.

It is not now as it hath been of yore;—
 Turn wheresoe'er I may,
 By night or day,
 The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

II

 The Rainbow comes and goes,
 And lovely is the Rose,
 The Moon doth with delight
 Look round her when the heavens are bare,
 Waters on a starry night
 Are beautiful and fair;
 The sunshine is a glorious birth;
 But yet I know, where'er I go,
 That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

III

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
 And while the young lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound,
 To me alone there came a thought of grief:
 A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
 And I again am strong:
 The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;
 No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;
 I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,
 The Winds come to me from the field of sleep,
 And all the earth is gay;
 Land and sea
 Give themselves up to jollity,
 And with the heart of May
 Doth every Beast keep holiday;—
 Thou Child of Joy,
 Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy
 Shepherd-boy!

IV

Ye blessed Creatures, I have heard the call
 Ye to each other make; I see
 The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
 My heart is at your festival,

My head hath its coronal,
 The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.
 Oh evil day! if I were sullen
 While Earth herself is adorning,
 This sweet May-morning,
 And the Children are culling,
 On every side,
 In a thousand valleys far and wide,
 Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm,
 And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm:—
 I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
 —But there's a Tree, of many, one,
 A single Field which I have looked upon,
 Both of them speak of something that is gone:
 The Pansy at my feet
 Doth the same tale repeat:
 Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
 Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

V

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
 The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
 Hath had elsewhere its setting,
 And cometh from afar:
 Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,
 But trailing clouds of glory do we come
 From God, who is our home:
 Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
 Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 Upon the growing Boy,
 But He beholds the light, and whence it flows,
 He sees it in his joy;
 The Youth, who daily farther from the east
 Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
 And by the vision splendid
 Is on his way attended;
 At length the Man perceives it die away,
 And fade into the light of common day.

VI

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;
 Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
 And, even with something of a Mother's mind
 And no unworthy aim,
 The homely Nurse doth all she can
 To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
 Forget the glories he hath known,
 And that imperial palace whence he came.

VII

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
 A six-years' Darling of a pigmy size!
 See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
 Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
 With light upon him from his father's eyes!
 See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
 Some fragment from his dream of human life,
 Shaped by himself with newly-learned art;
 A wedding or a festival,
 A mourning or a funeral;
 And this hath now his heart,
 And unto this he frames his song:
 Then will he fit his tongue
 To dialogues of business, love, or strife:
 But it will not be long
 Ere this be thrown aside,
 And with new joy and pride
 The little Actor cons another part;
 Filling from time to time his "humorous stage"
 With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,
 That Life brings with her in her equipage;
 As if his whole vocation
 Were endless imitation.

VIII

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
 Thy Soul's immensity;
 Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep
 Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,

That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
 Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—
 Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
 On whom those truths do rest,
 Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
 In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
 Thou, over whom thy Immortality
 Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,
 A Presence which is not to be put by;
 Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might
 Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
 Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
 The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
 Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
 Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,
 And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
 Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

IX

O joy! that in our embers
 Is something that doth live,
 That nature yet remembers
 What was so fugitive!
 The thought of our past years in me doth breed
 Perpetual benediction: not indeed
 For that which is most worthy to be blest;
 Delight and liberty, the simple creed
 Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
 With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:
 Not for these I raise
 The song of thanks and praise;
 But for those obstinate questionings
 Of sense and outward things,
 Fallings from us, vanishings;
 Blank misgivings of a Creature
 Moving about in worlds not realised,
 High instincts before which our mortal Nature
 Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised:
 But for those first affections,
 Those shadowy recollections,

Which, be they what they may,
 Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
 Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
 Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
 Our noisy years seem moments in the being
 Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake
 To perish never;
 Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
 Nor Man nor Boy,
 Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
 Can utterly abolish or destroy!
 Hence, in a season of calm weather
 Though inland far we be,
 Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
 Which brought us hither,
 Can in a moment travel thither,
 And see the Children sport upon the shore,
 And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

x

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
 And let the young Lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound!
 We in thought will join your throng,
 Ye that pipe and ye that play,
 Ye that through your hearts to-day
 Feel the gladness of the May!
 What though the radiance which was once so bright
 Be now for ever taken from my sight,
 Though nothing can bring back the hour
 Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;
 We will grieve not, rather find
 Strength in what remains behind;
 In the primal sympathy
 Which having been must ever be;
 In the soothing thoughts that spring
 Out of human suffering;
 In the faith that looks through death,
 In years that bring the philosophic mind.

WORDSWORTH

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
 Forbode not any severing of our loves!
 Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
 I only have relinquished one delight
 To live beneath your more habitual sway.
 I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,
 Even more than when I tripped lightly as they;
 The innocent brightness of a new-born Day
 Is lovely yet;
 The Clouds that gather round the setting sun
 Do take a sober colouring from an eye
 That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;
 Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
 Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
 Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
 To me the meanest flower that blows can give
 Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

THACKERAY

THE END OF THE PLAY

The play is done; the curtain drops,
 Slow falling to the prompter's bell:
 A moment yet the actor stops,
 And looks around, to say farewell.
 It is an irksome word and task;
 And, when he's laughed and said his say,
 He shows, as he removes the mask,
 A face that's anything but gay.

One word, ere yet the evening ends,
 Let's close it with a parting rhyme,
 And pledge a hand to all young friends,
 As fits the merry Christmas-time.
 On life's wide scene you, too, have parts,
 That Fate ere long shall bid you play;
 Good night! with honest gentle hearts
 A kindly greeting go away!

Good night!—I'd say, the griefs, the joys,
Just hinted in this mimic page,
The triumphs and defeats of boys,
Are but repeated in our age.
I'd say, your woes were not less keen,
Your hopes more vain than those of men;
Your pangs or pleasures of fifteen
At forty-five played o'er again.

I'd say, we suffer and we strive,
Not less nor more as men than boys;
With grizzled beards at forty-five,
As erst at twelve in corduroys.
And if, in time of sacred youth,
We learned at home to love and pray,
Pray Heaven that early Love and Truth
May never wholly pass away.

And in the world, as in the school,
I'd say, how fate may change and shift;
The prize be sometimes with the fool,
The race not always to the swift.
The strong may yield, the good may fall,
The great man be a vulgar clown,
The knave be lifted over all,
The kind cast pitilessly down.

Who knows the inscrutable design?
Blessed be He who took and gave!
Why should your mother, Charles, not mine,
Be weeping at her darling's grave?
We bow to Heaven that will'd it so,
That darkly rules the fate of all,
That sends the respite or the blow,
That's free to give, or to recall.

This crowns his feast with wine and wit:
Who brought him to that mirth and state?
His betters, see, below him sit,
Or hunger hopeless at the gate.

Who bade the mud from Dives' wheel
 To spurn the rags of Lazarus?
 Come, brother, in that dust we'll kneel,
 Confessing Heaven that ruled it thus.

So each shall mourn, in life's advance,
 Dear hopes, dear friends, untimely killed;
 Shall grieve for many a forfeit chance,
 And longing passion unfulfilled.
 Amen! whatever fate be sent,
 Pray God the heart may kindly glow,
 Although the head with cares be bent,
 And whitened with the winter snow.

Come wealth or want, come good or ill,
 Let young and old accept their part,
 And bow before the Awful Will,
 And bear it with an honest heart,
 Who misses, or who wins the prize.
 Go, lose or conquer as you can;
 But if you fail, or if you rise,
 Be each, pray God, a gentleman.

A gentleman, or old or young!
 (Bear kindly with my humble lays);
 The sacred chorus first was sung
 Upon the first of Christmas Days:
 The shepherds heard it overhead—
 The joyful angels raised it then:
 Glory to Heaven on high, it said,
 And peace on earth to gentle men.

My song, save this, is little worth;
 I lay the weary pen aside,
 And wish you health, and love, and mirth,
 As fits the solemn Christmas-tide.
 As fits the holy Christmas birth,
 Be this, good friends, our carol still—
 Be peace on earth, be peace on earth,
 To men of gentle will.

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